

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

SANTINIKETAN
VISWA BHARATI
LIBRARY

940.3

AL 47

V. 12

HISTORY OF EUROPE

DURING

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

“**BELLUM** maxime omnium memorabile, quæ unquam gesta sint, me scriptum; quod, Hannibale duce, Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit: et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas primo Punico conserebant bello; odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt, quam viribus; et adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint, qui vicerunt.”—*LIV.* lib. 21.

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.E.

ADVOCATE.

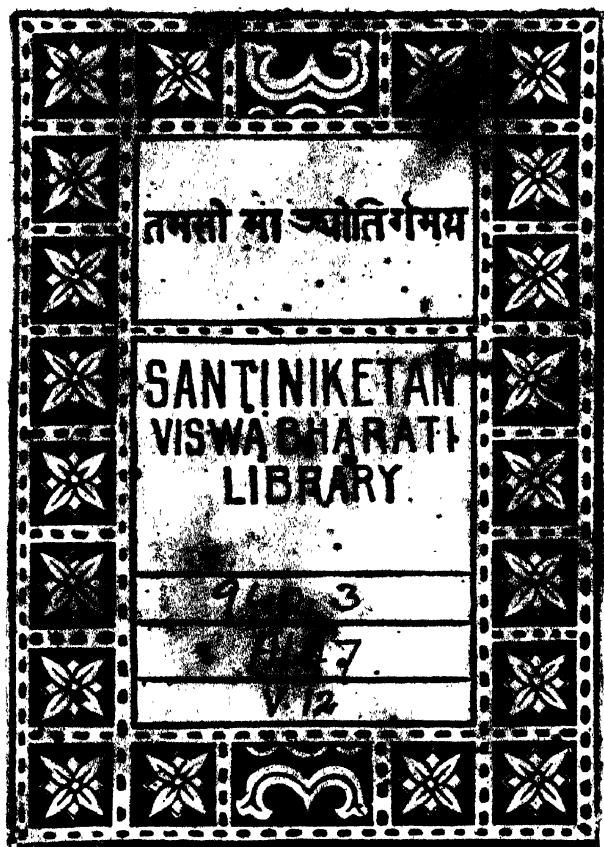
VOLUME THE TWELFTH.

SEVENTH EDITION.

17,453

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.

M.DCCC.XLVII.



CONTENTS OF VOL. XII.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE SPANISH PENINSULA AT THE OPENING OF THE WAR.

	Page
1. Memorable events of which the Spanish peninsula has been the theatre, -	1
2. Uniform and singular character of its guerilla warfare, -	2
3. Physical conformation of the country which has led to these effects, -	3
4. General character of the Peninsula, -	4
5. Statistics of Spain, -	ib.
6. Great mountain ranges of Spain and Portugal, -	5
7. Mountain ridges in the south of Spain, -	6
8. Extraordinary resolution with which in every age the Spaniards have defended their cities, -	7
9. Peculiarities in the civil history of the Peninsula which have rendered it a divided community, -	8
10. It has never been thoroughly amalgamated, -	ib.
11. Effect of these circumstances in promoting the means of internal and separate defence, -	9
12. Corruption of the nobility, and extent to which entails were carried, -	10
13. State of the peasantry, -	ib.
14. Statistical details on that subject, -	11
15. The church, its influence and character, -	12
16. Its immense usefulness to the people, -	ib.
17. Its great influence in the Spanish contest, -	13
18. Spain was still unexhausted by revolutionary passions, -	14
19. Composition and character of the French army at this period, -	15
20. Their discipline, equipment, and efficiency, -	17
21. Force and character of the British army, -	18
22. Admirable spirit with which it was animated and regarded by the people, -	19
23. Character and qualities of the British soldiers, -	20
24. Parallel between the British and French troops, -	ib.
25. Effect of their officers being exclusively taken from the higher ranks, -	21
26. The English soldiers were contented with their lot, -	22

	Page
§ 27. Which arose from the self-respect of all classes, - - - - -	22
28. Severe discipline. Corporal punishments which still subsisted, - - -	23
29. Physical comforts of the British soldiers, - - - - -	ib.
30. Difficulty of keeping any considerable force together in the interior of the Peninsula, - - - - -	25
31. Fortunate position of the British troops, - - - - -	26
32. Military force of Spain at the commencement of the contest, - - -	ib.
33. Character and habits of the officers, - - - - -	27
34. Military force and physical character of Portugal, - - - - -	28
35. General corruption and abuses in the military establishment, - - -	ib.
36. Amount, quality, and disposition of the French army at this period in Spain, - - - - -	29
37. Progress and early forces of the insurrection, - - - - -	30
38. Vigorous efforts at first made for carrying on the contest, - - -	31
39. Frightful disorders which signalled the commencement of the insurrection in some cities, - - - - -	32
40. Massacres with which the revolution in Valencia commenced, - - -	33
41. Abominable cruelty of Calvo and the insurgents, - - - - -	34
42. Deserved punishment of Calvo and his associates, - - - - -	ib.
43. Prudent measures adopted by the nobles at Seville. Proceedings of its Junta, - - - - -	35
44. Fortunate overthrow of the extreme democrats, - - - - -	36
45. Capture of the French fleet at Cadiz, - - - - -	37
46. Insurrection in Asturias, Galicia, Catalonia, and Aragon, - - -	39
47. Measures of Napoleon in regard to the insurrection, - - - - -	40
48. Proceedings of the Notables assembled at Bayonne, - - - - -	41
49. General recognition of Joseph by the Spanish Notables, - - - - -	ib.
50. Constitution at Bayonne given by Napoleon to the Spaniards, - - -	42
51. Proceedings of Napoleon, Joseph, and the Junta of Notables, at Bayonne,	43
52. New ministry of Joseph, and his journey to, and arrival and reception at Madrid, - - - - -	45
53. Honourable instances of resistance to the general torrent of adulation in his favour among the grantees, - - - - -	ib.
54. Universal joy with which the news of the insurrection is received in England, - - - - -	47
55. Enthusiasm of the popular party in the cause, - - - - -	48
56. Noble speech of Mr Sheridan on the Spanish war in parliament, - - -	ib.
57. Reply of Mr Secretary Canning, - - - - -	49
58. Reflections on this debate, - - - - -	50
59. Consistence of these views with the true principles of freedom, - - -	51
60. English budget for 1808, - - - - -	ib.
61. Immense extent of the supplies which were sent out to Spain from Great Britain, - - - - -	52
62. Beneficial effects with which these efforts were attended, - - - -	53

CHAPTER LIV.

NAPOLEON'S FIRST DISASTERS IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

1. Military measures adopted by Napoleon against the insurrection, - - -	54
2. Successful operations of Bessières and Frère in Old Castile and Leon, -	55
3. Which had the effect of entirely subduing that part of the country, -	56

CONTENTS.

iii

	Page
§ 4. Operations in Aragon. First siege of Saragossa,	56
5. Description of Saragossa,	57
6. General concurrence of all classes in the defence,	58
7. Operations of Palafox to relieve the city. He is defeated, and re-enters it,	59
8. First operations of the siege,	60
9. Progress of the besiegers,	61
10. Desperate assault of the town,	62
11. Continued contest in the streets,	63
12. The Spaniards gradually regain the ascendant,	64
13. Operations of Monag in Valencia,	65
14. Description of Valencia, and preparations for its defence,	66
15. Attack on the city. Its repulse,	67
16. Progress of the insurrection, and partial successes of the patriots in that quarter,	68
17. Advance of Cuesta in Leon on the French communications,	69
18. Operations of Bessières against Blake and Cuesta in Leon,	70
19. Movements preparatory to a battle on both sides,	71
20. Battle of Rio Seco,	72
21. Defeat of the Spaniards,	73
22. Farther preparations of Napoleon for the war,	74
23. March of Dupont into Andalusia,	ib.
24. Capture of the bridge of Vinta de Alcolea,	75
25. Taking and sack of Cordova,	ib.
26. Accumulation of forces under Castanos round the invaders,	77
27. Dismay of the Spaniards and irresolution of Dupont,	78
28. Retreat of Dupont to Andujar and Baylen,	79
29. Spanish plan of attack, and preparatory movements on both sides,	80
30. Character of Dupont,	81
31. Singular manner in which the armies became interlaced,	82
32. Movements which led to the battle of Baylen,	ib.
33. Battle of Baylen,	83
34. Defeat of the French,	ib.
35. Tardy arrival of Vedel, who shares in the disgrace,	84
36. Capitulation of Dupont,	85
37. Immense sensation which it produces in Spain and over Europe,	86
38. Disastrous effect of the delusive opinion entertained of this victory,	87
39. Opinion of Napoleon on this capitulation,	88
40. Shameful violation of the capitulation by the Spaniards,	ib.
41. And their disgraceful treatment of the prisoners,	89
42. Departure of Joseph from Madrid, and concentration of the French troops behind the Ebro,	91
43. Campaign in Catalonia,	92
44. Defeat of Schwartz near Casa Mansana,	93
45. Universal spread of the insurrection,	94
46. Defeat of a coup-de-main by the French against Gerona,	95
47. Expedition against Rosas, which is defeated,	96
48. Unsuccessful siege of Gerona,	ib.
49. The siege is raised by the Spaniards from Tarragona,	97
50. Universal transports in the Peninsula. Entry of the Spanish troops into the capital,	98
51. Neglect of any efficient measures in the general exultation,	99
52. Affairs of Portugal, and disarming of the Spanish troops in that country,	ib.
53. Progress of the insurrection,	101
54. Operations of Loison in the Alentejo,	102
55. The English cabinet resolve on sending succours to Portugal,	103
56. Strange substitution of successive commanders to the British expedition,	104

	Page
§ 57. Sir A. Wellesley takes the command of the expedition, and arrives off Mondego Bay, - - - - -	105
58. Arrival of the British troops at Mondego Bay, and proclamation by Sir A. Wellesley, - - - - -	106
59. Landing of the army, - - - - -	107
60. March of the British troops to Roliça, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
61. Advance of the British to attack the French there, - - - - -	108
62. Combat of Roliça, - - - - -	109
63. Victory of the British, - - - - -	110
64. The British advance to Vimeira, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
65. Sir A. Wellesley's plans are overruled by Sir H. Burrard, - - - - -	111
66. Description of the field of battle of Vimeira, - - - - -	112
67. Positions taken up by the two armies, - - - - -	113
68. Battle of Vimeira, - - - - -	114
69. Desperate conflict on the left, - - - - -	115
70. Defeat of the French, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
71. Sir A. Wellesley proposes to follow up the victory, - - - - -	116
72. But is prevented by Sir Harry Burrard, - - - - -	117
73. An armistice is concluded, - - - - -	118
74. Reasons which led to an armistice on both sides, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
75. Convention of Cintra, - - - - -	119
76. Senseless clamour in England on the subject, leads to a court of inquiry. Its result, - - - - -	120
77. A court of inquiry is held, and its results, - - - - -	121
78. Its expedience at that juncture, - - - - -	122
79. Napoleon's views on that subject, - - - - -	123
80. Disgraceful revelations which are made at Lisbon of the plunder by all ranks in the French army, - - - - -	125
81. Enormous extent of the plunder the French superior officers endeavoured to carry off, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
82. Great part of the plunder is wrested from the French, - - - - -	126
83. The British troops are placed under the command of Sir John Moore, - - - - -	127
84. Strength of the united British forces, and their advance into Spain, - - - - -	129
85. Great difficulty in forming a central junta at Madrid, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
86. Appointment of a central junta at Madrid, - - - - -	130
87. Miserable condition of the central government and armies on the Ebro, - - - - -	131
88. The Marquis Romana obtains information of what is going on in Spain, - - - - -	132
89. Escape of the Marquis and his troops, - - - - -	133
90. Extraordinary scene at the embarkation of the troops, - - - - -	134

CHAPTER LV.

IRRUPTION OF NAPOLEON INTO SPAIN.

1. Deep impression which these events made on the mind of Napoleon, - - - - -	135
2. Armaments of Austria, and negotiations with that power and the Princes of the Rhenish Confederacy, - - - - -	136
3. Napoleon's preparations to meet the danger, and great levy of men by the French government, - - - - -	137
4. Treaty with Prussia, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
5. Interview at Erfurth with Alexander, - - - - -	138
6. Its secret object, and tenor of the conferences held there, - - - - -	139
7. Fêtes and spectacles at Erfurth, - - - - -	140

CONTENTS.

V

	Page
§ 8. And on the field of Jena, - - - - -	142
9. Secret views of both parties at the conference, - - - - -	143
10. Tenor of the conferences held there, - - - - -	144
11. Concessions made by Napoleon to Russia and Prussia, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
12. Their differences concerning Napoleon's marriage, and Turkey, - - - - -	145
13. Treaty with Prussia, and Murat declared King of Naples, - - - - -	146
14. Napoleon returns to Paris, and sets out for the Ebro, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
15. Immense force there collected by Napoleon, - - - - -	147
16. Positions and strength of the Spaniards, - - - - -	148
17. March, position, and strength of the British army, - - - - -	149
18. Deplorable division of the British and Spanish troops, - - - - -	150
19. Movements on the French left before the arrival of Napoleon, - - - - -	151
20. Check of Castanos at Logrono, - - - - -	152
21. Defeat of Blake at Tornosa, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
22. Position of the French and Spanish armies on Napoleon's arrival, - - - - -	153
23. Actions at Espinosa, - - - - -	154
24. Total defeat of the Spaniards at Reynosa, - - - - -	155
25. Battle of Burgos, and defeat of the Spanish centre, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
26. Movement against Castanos and Palafox, - - - - -	156
27. Positions of the French and Spanish armies before the battle of Tudela, - - - - -	157
28. Total defeat of the Spaniards, - - - - -	158
29. Disorderly and eccentric retreat of the Spanish armies from the Ebro, - - - - -	160
30. Rapid and concentrated advance of the French armies to Madrid, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
31. Forcing of the Somo-sierra pass, - - - - -	161
32. Prodigious agitation at Madrid, - - - - -	162
33. Capture of the Retiro, - - - - -	163
34. Capitulation of Madrid, - - - - -	164
35. Napoleon's measures for the tranquillising of Spain, - - - - -	165
36. Positions of the French corps in the end of December, - - - - -	167
37. Vast forces at the disposal of the Emperor, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
38. Bold advance of Sir John Moore, - - - - -	168
39. Determination of Moore to advance, and joy which it diffused through the army, - - - - -	169
40. Advance to Sahagun, on the French line of communication, - - - - -	170
41. Preparations for attacking Soult on the Carrion, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
42. This movement paralyses the farther advance of the French to the south, - - - - -	171
43. Rapid march of Napoleon with an overwhelming force towards the English troops, - - - - -	172
44. The English retreat on the line of Galicia, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
45. Gallant action of light cavalry with the enemy, and capture of Lefebvre Desnouettes, - - - - -	173
46. The Emperor continues the pursuit to Astorga, - - - - -	175
47. But thence returns to Paris, - - - - -	176
48. Sir John Moore retires to Lugo, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
49. Increasing disorder of the retreat, - - - - -	177
50. And offers battle, which is declined, - - - - -	178
51. Continues the retreat to Corunna. Hardships undergone by the troops, - - - - -	179
52. Arrival at Corunna of the troops and the transports from Vigo Bay, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
53. Position of the British in front of Corunna, - - - - -	180
54. Battle of Corunna. Commencement of the action, - - - - -	181
55. Vehement struggle in the centre, - - - - -	182
56. Repulse of the French, - - - - -	183
57. Mortal wound of Sir John Moore, - - - - -	184
58. His death, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
59. His grave, and veneration with which it is regarded in Spain, - - - - -	185
60. Embarkation of the troops, and their return to England, - - - - -	186

	Page
§ 61. Extreme gloom which these events produce in the British isles, - - -	187
62. Despair which seized the public mind, - - -	188
63. Horror excited by the appearance of the army on its return, - - -	ib.
64. Reflections on the campaign; its character checkered, but on the whole eminently unfavourable to France, - - -	189
65. Reflections on the campaign, and effect of Sir John Moore's movement, -	190
66. Errors which he committed, - - -	191
67. Especially in the undue rapidity of the retreat, - - -	192
68. Errors of Sir David Baird, - - -	ib.
69. It was public opinion which was really to blame, - - -	194
70. Moore's desponding views with regard to the contest, - - -	195
71. Reflections on the character of the British and French armies. Superiority of the former in fighting, - - -	196
72. And of the French, as yet, in the other duties of a campaign, - - -	197

CHAPTER LVI.

CAMPAIGN OF ABENSBERG, LANDSHUT, AND ECHMUHL.

1. Influence of the aristocratic and democratic principles on the contending parties in Europe, - - -	198
2. Policy of the Imperial cabinet since the peace of Presburg, - - -	199
3. Important decree ordering the formation of the landwehr, June 1808, -	200
4. Napoleon's remonstrances against these measures, - - -	201
5. Deceitful pacific professions of Austria at Erfurth, - - -	202
6. Intelligence of the preparations of Austria induces Napoleon to halt in Spain and return to Paris, - - -	203
7. Division of opinion in the Austrian cabinet on the war, - - -	204
8. Arguments used on both sides, - - -	205
9. Amount and distribution of the French forces in Germany, in spring 1809, - - -	207
10. Efforts of Austria to obtain the accession of Russia to the confederacy, -	ib.
11. Prussia resolves to remain neutral, - - -	208
12. General effervescence in Germany in aid of the Austrian cause, - - -	209
13. Character of Metternich the Austrian ambassador at Paris, - - -	210
14. Angry interchange of notes between the French and Austrian courts, -	211
15. Deep umbrage taken by Austria at the conference of Erfurth, - - -	212
16. Measures for the concentration of the French army, - - -	ib.
17. Preparations and forces of Austria, - - -	213
18. Spirit which animated all classes of the Austrian empire, - - -	214
19. Last diplomatic communications at Paris, - - -	215
20. Austrian plan of the campaign, - - -	216
21. Plans of Napoleon, - - -	217
22. Commencement of hostilities by the Austrians, - - -	218
23. Impolitic delay in their early movements, - - -	219
24. First movements of the Austrians, and imminent danger of the French, -	220
25. Imprudent dispersion of his forces by Berthier, and slow advance of the Austrians, - - -	221
26. Faulty movements of Berthier to arrest their progress, - - -	ib.
27. Advance of the Austrians almost cuts in two the French army, - - -	222
28. Napoleon instantly reassembles his army, - - -	223
29. Movements of the two armies towards each other, - - -	224
30. Napoleon's plan of operations. Its great dangers, - - -	225

CONTENTS.

vii

	Page
§ 31. Actions between Davoust and Hohenzollern at Thaur, - - -	226
32. Positions of the two armies on the night of the 19th, - - -	227
33. Napoleon's address to the German confederates, - - -	ib.
34. Their dangerous situation, - - -	228
35. Combats of Abensberg, - - -	229
36. Hiller pursued to Landshut by Napoleon, - - -	230
37. His defeat by the Emperor, - - -	231
38. Operations of Davoust and the Archduke Charles in the centre, - -	232
39. Attack and capture of Ratisbon by the Austrians, - - -	233
40. Preparatory movements on both sides, - - -	234
41. Description of the field of battle, - - -	235
42. Battle of Echmühl, - - -	236
43. Napoleon gains the victory, - - -	237
44. Desperate cavalry action in front of Ratisbon, - - -	238
45. In which the Austrian horse are at length overthrown, - - -	239
46. The Archduke retreats across the Danube, and Ratisbon is taken by the French, - - -	ib.
47. Operations against Ratisbon by the French, and wound of Napoleon, -	241
48. Its assault, - - -	ib.
49. Great results of these actions, - - -	242
50. The indefatigable activity of Napoleon and his soldiers was the principal cause of these successes, - - -	243
51. Impressive scene in the conferring of military honours at Ratisbon, -	244
52. Defeat of the Bavarians by Hiller, - - -	245
53. Successful operations of the Archduke John in Italy, - - -	246
54. Total defeat of Eugene Beauharnais at Sacile, - - -	247
55. Important effects of this victory on the Italian campaign, - - -	248
56. Hopes which the commencement of the campaign afforded to the Allies, -	249

CHAPTER LVII.

CAMPAIGN OF ASPERN.

1. Measures of Napoleon for a grand concentric attack upon Vienna, - -	250
2. Defensive measures of the Archduke Charles, - - -	251
3. Napoleon advances to the borders of the Traun, - - -	252
4. March of the army to Ebersberg, - - -	253
5. Description of the scenery near Salzburg, - - -	ib.
6. Causes of its extraordinary beauty, - - -	254
7. Description of the position of Ebersberg, - - -	255
8. And of the Austrian corps which occupied it, - - -	ib.
9. Massena resolves to attack. Desperate gallantry of the French, - -	256
10. After a frightful struggle the post is still maintained, - - -	257
11. After a desperate struggle the French gain the pass, - - -	258
12. Hiller falls back towards Vienna, - - -	259
13. Advance of the French army towards Vienna, - - -	260
14. And arrives before that city, - - -	261
15. Napoleon's observation on Richard Cœur de Lion, - - -	ib.
16. Ineffectual attempt to defend Vienna, - - -	262
17. Napoleon's measures to reduce Vienna, - - -	263
18. Napoleon's first attentions to the future Empress Marie Louise, -	264
19. The Archduke Maximilian abandons Vienna, which capitulates, - -	ib.

	Page
§ 20. Positions of the different corps of the French armies in the middle of May,	265
21. Movements of the Archduke Charles, and position of his army,	266
22. The Archduke at length advances towards Vienna,	267
23. Retreat of the Archduke John from Italy,	268
24. Battle of the Piave,	269
25. Defeat of the Austrians,	270
26. Retreat of the Austrians from Italy into Hungary,	271
27. Capture of the mountain forts of Carinthia and Styria by the French,	ib.
28. Assault of the Col di Tarwis and other forts,	272
29. Noble defence of Hermann, and progress of Macdonald,	273
30. Fall of Trieste, Laybach, and the whole frontier defences of Austria,	274
31. Total defeat of Jellachich in the Valley of the Muhr,	275
* 32. Eugene advances to Vienna, and joins Napoleon,	276
33. Chances of the conflict under the walls of Vienna to either party,	ib.
34. Napoleon resolves to attack the enemy, and cross the Danube,	277
35. Description of the islands of the Danube near Vienna, and the different channels of the river,	278
36. Napoleon's preparations to effect the passage. Failure at Nussdorf,	279
37. His vigorous efforts to effect a passage at Lobau,	ib.
38. Passage of the river,	280
39. Operations of the Archduke on the Upper Danube at Lintz and Krems,	281
40. The Archduke resolves to attack the French who had crossed,	282
41. Austrian plan and order of attack,	283
42. Position and dangers of the French army,	284
43. Napoleon is surprised, but resolves to give battle,	285
44. Austrian plan of attack, and forces on both sides,	286
45. Desperate conflict at Aspern,	287
46. Which is at length carried by the Austrians,	ib.
47. Grand charge of the French cavalry in the centre,	288
48. Bloody attack on Essling, which proves unsuccessful,	289
49. Feelings with which both parties passed the night on the field of battle,	290
50. Heroic constancy of the French,	291
51. Renewal of the action on the 22d. Aspern and Essling are again obstinately disputed,	292
52. Aspern is finally carried by the Austrians,	293
53. Napoleon makes a grand attack on the Austrian centre,	ib.
54. Which is at first successful,	294
55. Desperate resistance of the Austrian centre,	295
56. Success of Hohenzollern, and rupture of the bridges,	296
57. The French retire towards the island of Lobau,	ib.
58. Invincible defence of Essling by the Imperial Guard,	297
59. Last attack of the Austrians, and fall of Marshal Lannes,	298
60. His death,	ib.
61. Results of the battle, and loss on both sides,	299
62. Deplorable situation of the French army in the island of Lobau, on the night of the 22d,	301
63. Council of war in the island of Lobau, in which it is resolved by Napoleon to maintain himself in that island,	302
64. And the position there is accordingly maintained, and Napoleon retires to Vienna,	303
65. Reflections on the conduct of Napoleon in the battle of Aspern,	ib.
66. His military errors and rashness on this occasion,	304
67. Observations on the French method of attacking in column,	305
68. Disadvantages of the attack in column when steadily resisted,	306
69. Napoleon's reasons for his rash conduct,	307
70. Glorious character of the Austrian resistance at Aspern,	308

CONTENTS.

ix

	Page
§ 71. Disastrous effects of the Archduke John's disobedience of orders, - - -	309
72. Immense importance of central fortresses on the defence of nations, - - -	310
73. Infatuation of England in this respect, - - - - -	311

CHAPTER LVIII.

WAR IN THE TYROL, NORTHERN GERMANY, AND POLAND.

1. Extraordinary interest of the Tyrolese war, - - - - -	312
2. Description of Tyrol, - - - - -	313
3. Opposite character of the northern and southern sides of the mountains, - - -	<i>ib.</i>
4. Description of the great valleys and rivers of the Tyrol, - - - - -	314
5. Valley of the Adige and its rapid, - - - - -	315
6. Castles of the Tyrol, - - - - -	316
7. Its lakes, - - - - -	317
8. Superstitions of the country, - - - - -	318
9. Their religious feelings and impressions, - - - - -	319
10. Omens which were observed on the approach of the war, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
11. Powerful religious feelings of the people, - - - - -	320
12. Practical utility of the priests, - - - - -	321
13. Remarkable difference in this respect of ancient and modern times, - - -	322
14. Influence of religion in producing the Tyrolese character, - - - - -	324
15. National character of the Tyrolese compared with that of the Swiss, - - -	325
16. Love of freedom which animates the people. Their character and man- ners, - - - - -	326
17. Practical freedom which the people have always enjoyed under the Aus- trian government, - - - - -	327
18. The peasants are all owners of their land. Great influence of this on their character, - - - - -	328
19. Astonishing industry of the people, - - - - -	329
20. Mechanical contrivances in the Tyrol, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
21. Discontent of the people under the Bavarian government, - - - - -	330
22. Preparations of Austria to take advantage of this discontent, - - - - -	331
23. Military description of the country, - - - - -	332
24. Hofer, his birth and descent, - - - - -	333
25. His character and disposition, - - - - -	334
26. Of Spechbacher, - - - - -	335
27. Of Joseph Haspinger, the friar, - - - - -	336
28. Of Martin Teimer and Baron Hormayer, - - - - -	337
29. Brave preparations of the people for the contest, - - - - -	338
30. Insurrection in the Tyrol. Its early and complete success, - - - - -	339
31. Successes in the Pusterthal, - - - - -	340
32. Defeat of the Bavarians by Hofer at the Sterzinger Moos, - - - - -	341
33. Capture of Innspruck by the peasants of the Upper Innthal, - - - - -	342
34. Striking incident which occurred on the capture of Innspruck, - - - - -	343
35. Arrival, defeat, and surrender of Blisson's division from Sterzing, - - -	344
36. Capture of Hall by Spechbacher, - - - - -	345
37. Results of these successes. Entire deliverance of the Tyrol, - - - - -	346
38. Menaces of Napoleon against Chastellar in the Tyrol, - - - - -	347
39. Actions in the Southern Tyrol, which is evacuated by the French, - - -	348
40. Actions on the Salzberg frontier, - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
41. Combats at Feuer Singer, and Wörgl, - - - - -	350

	* Page
§ 42. Innsbruck taken by the Bavarians, - - - - -	351
43. The Archduke John violates his orders and promises, and evacuates Styria and the Tyrol, - - - - -	ib.
44. Desperate state of affairs in the Tyrol, and firmness of the peasantry, -	352
45. Preparations for the battle of Innsbruck, - - - - -	353
46. Battle of Innsbruck, and total defeat of the Bavarians, - - - - -	354
47. Bloody action of Hofer and Haspinger, - - - - -	355
48. Results of these victories in the entire deliverance of the Tyrol, - -	357
49. The Tyrolese even make incursions into all the neighbouring country, -	ib.
50. Rise of the insurrection in the north of Germany, - - - - -	358
51. The first outbreak on the approach of the Austrian Grand Army, - -	359
52. Enterprise and early success of Schill, - - - - -	360
53. Fails in his attempt on Magdeburg, and retires to Stralsund, - -	361
54. His prospects there, - - - - -	362
55. His defeat and death, - - - - -	363
56. Movement of the Duke of Brunswick, - - - - -	364
57. Operations in Poland under the Archduke Ferdinand, - - - - -	365
58. Object of those operations, - - - - -	ib.
59. Forces of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw. Success of Ferdinand and fall of Warsaw, - - - - -	366
60. Skilful measures of Poniatowsky to prolong the contest in the Grand-duchy, -	367
61. Discovery of the secret leaning of the Russians towards Austria, - -	368
62. Great distrust it excited in the mind of Napoleon, - - - - -	369
63. Secret negotiation between Austria and Prussia, - - - - -	ib.
64. The exorbitant demands of Prussia cause it to fall, - - - - -	370
65. Operations in Italy, and diversion from Sicily, - - - - -	371
66. Situation and prospects of Napoleon after the battle of Aspern. Duke of Brunswick takes Dresden, - - - - -	373
67. Proclamation and energetic proceedings of the Duke of Brunswick. -	ib.

HISTORY OF EUROPE.



CHAPTER LIII.

THE SPANISH PENINSULA AT THE OPENING OF THE WAR.

THE Spanish Peninsula, in which a frightful war was now about to commence, and where the armies of France and England at last found a permanent theatre of combat, has been distinguished from the earliest times by memorable achievements, and rendered illustrious by the exploits of the greatest captains who have ever left the impress of their actions on the course of human events. The mighty genius of Hannibal there began its career, and under the walls of Saguntum gave the earliest indication of that vast capacity which was soon to shake to its foundation the enduring fabric of Roman power. Scipio Africanus there first revived the almost desperate fortunes of the republic, and matured those talents which were destined on a distant shore to overthrow the fortunes of the inveterate enemy of his country. The talents of Pompey, the genius of Cæsar, were exerted on its plains. A severer struggle than that of Pharsalia awaited the founder of the empire on the shores of the Ebro. The desperate contest between the Cross and the Crescent raged for centuries amidst its mountains, and from their rocks the wave of Mussulman conquest was first permanently repelled. Nor has the Peninsula been in modern times the theatre of less

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

I.
Memorable
events of
which the
Spanish
Peninsula has
been the
theatre.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

memorable exploits. The standards of Charlemagne have waved in its passes; the bugles of Roncesvalles have resounded through the world; the chivalry of the Black Prince, the skill of Gonzalvo of Cordova, have been displayed in its defence. The genius of Napoleon, the firmness of Wellington, have been exerted on its plains; and, like their great predecessors in the wars of Rome and Carthage, these two illustrious chiefs rolled the chariot of victory over its surface, and, missing each other, severally conquered every other opponent till their mutual renown filled the world, and Europe, in breathless suspense, awaited the issue of their conflict on another shore.

2.
Uniform and
singular char-
acter of its
Guerilla war-
fare.

From the earliest times the inhabitants of the Peninsula have been distinguished by a peculiarity of military character and mode of conducting war which is very remarkable. Inferior to many other nations in the firmness and discipline with which they withstand the shock of battle, they are superior to them all in the readiness with which they rally after defeat, and the invincible tenacity with which they maintain a contest under circumstances of disaster, when any other people would succumb in despair. In vain are their armies defeated and dispersed, their fortresses taken, their plains overrun, their capital subdued. Singly or in small bodies they renew the conflict; they rally and reunite as rapidly as they disperse; the numerous mountain chains which intersect their country afford a refuge for their broken bands; their cities make a desperate though insulated defence; and from the wreck of all regular or organised opposition emerges the redoubtable GUERRILLA warfare. "*Prælio victi Carthaginieneses,*" says Livy, "*in ultimam Hispaniæ oram, ad oceanum, compulsi erant—disparem autem; quod Hispania, non quam Italia modo, sed quam ulla pars terrarum, bello reparando aptior erat, locorum hominumque ingeniis. Gens nata instaurandis reparandisque bellis brevi replevit exercitum, animosque ad tentandum de integro certamen fecit.*"* It is a singular fact, strikingly illustra-

* "The Carthaginians, conquered in battle, were driven into the farthest provinces of Spain next the ocean. But they were unlike all other places; for Spain is better adapted, not merely than Italy, but than any part of the world, for repairing defeat, not merely by the nature of the country, but the disposition of

tive of the durable influence of common descent and physical circumstances on national character through all the varieties of time, religion, and political condition, that the system of warfare, thus deemed peculiar to Spain, of all nations in the world, in the days of Pompey and Sertorius, has continued to distinguish its inhabitants, without any interruption, to the present time. It was pursued without intermission for eight hundred years in their wars with the Moors, formed the characteristic of the struggle with Napoleon, and continues at this hour to be the leading feature of the savage contest between the aristocratic and democratic parties which has for so many years bathed the Peninsula in blood.*

Durable characteristics of this kind attaching for ages to a nation, though its inhabitants have in the course of them become the mixed progeny of many different races of mankind, will invariably be found to arise from some peculiarity in its physical circumstances, which has imprinted a lasting character on all its successive inhabitants. This is in an especial manner the case with Spain and Portugal. Their territory differs in many important particulars from any in Europe. Physically considered, it belongs as much to Africa as Europe. The same burning sun parches the mountains and dries up the valleys of both; no forests clothe their sides; naked, they present their arid fronts to the shivering blasts of the north and the scorching rays of a tropical sun. Vegetation in general spreads in proportion only as irrigation can be obtained. Aided by that powerful auxiliary, the steepest mountain sides of Catalonia and Arragon are cut into terraces and clothed with the most luxuriant vegetation: without it, vast plains in Leon and the Castiles are almost entirely destitute both of cultivation and inhabitants. So extensive in consequence are the desert tracts of Spain, that the country, viewed from the summit of any of the numerous mountain ridges with which its inland provinces are intersected,¹ in general exhibits only a confused

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

3.
Physical con-
formation of
the country
which has led
to these
effects.

¹ Suchet's
Mem. i. 42,
47. Nap. i.
52, 53. La-
borde, i. 163.
Borrow's
Bible in
Spain, ii. 117.

the people. A nation born for restoring the fortune and repairing the losses of wars, speedily refilled the ranks, and inspired the spirit to renew the contest."—
LIV.

* Written in 1837, during the heroic struggle maintained by the Carlists and the Basque provinces, against the government imposed on them by France and England.

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

group of barren elevated plains and lofty naked peaks, intersected here and there by a few glittering streams flowing in deep valleys, on the margins of which alone are to be seen crops and flocks, and the traces of human habitation. A feeling of melancholy steals over the mind in traversing its wide and broken plains; the general sterility is allied to sublimity; and, amidst the desolation of nature, deep impressions are made, and a lofty character communicated to the mind.

4.
General character of the Peninsula.

The whole Peninsula may be viewed as a vast mountainous promontory, which stretches from the Pyrenees to the southward, between the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas. On the shores of the ridge to the east and west are plains of admirable fertility, which at no distant period have been submerged by the waves of the sea; but in the interior an elevated assemblage of mountain ridges and lofty desert plains is to be found, in the centre of which Madrid is placed in an upland basin at a height of eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. The great rivers in consequence flow for the most part to the east and west in long courses, and are fed by tributary streams, which meander at the bottom of ravines of surprising depth, shut in often by precipitous banks or very steep declivities. Three great chaussées only—viz. that leading from Madrid to Bayonne by the Somo-Sierra pass, that to Valencia, and that to Barcelona—intersect this great central desert region; in every other quarter the roads are little better than mountain paths, uniting together towns built for the most part on the summit of hills, surrounded by walls, environed by superb olive woods, but having little intercourse either with each other or with the rest of Europe. It may readily be imagined what extraordinary advantages a country of such natural strength and character must afford to insulated and defensive warfare.¹

¹ Suchet's Mem. i. 42, 49. Nap. i. 52, 53. La-borde's Spain, i. 163, 169, Introd.

5.
Statistics of Spain.

Spain contains 23,850 square geographical leagues, or about 212,000 square geographical miles, being more than double the superficies of the British islands. It was inhabited in 1808 by eleven millions, which in 1834 had risen to 14,660,000 souls. Its revenue in 1826 was 105,000,000 francs, or £4,200,000; in 1833 162,000,000, or £6,500,000 sterling; and its public debt 4,000,000,000

francs, or £160,000,000. Its agriculture produces 1,847,000,000 francs, or £74,000,000 sterling annually. The total yearly produce of its industry, agricultural and commercial, is 2,250,000,000 francs or £90,000,000; facts indicating at once the disordered state of its finances, and the vast amount of its physical resources. The surface of the country, generally speaking, is arid, rocky, and sterile, unless aided by irrigation, which, however, whenever it can be obtained, produces under its genial sun luxuriant vegetation. In some alluvial plains, as those of Valencia, the Llobrigat in Catalonia, and the banks of the Guadalquivir in Andalusia, the soil is of surpassing fertility, and the crops rival those of Lombardy or the Campagna of Naples in variety and riches. Manufactures, with a few exceptions, are in every part of the country in a state of infancy.¹

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

In almost every quarter the country is intersected by long rocky and almost inaccessible mountain ridges, which form a barrier between province and province, almost as complete, not merely to hostile armies, but even to the inhabitants of the country, as that interposed by the Alps or the Pyrenees. Branching out from the great chain which separates France from Spain, one vast mountain ridge runs to the westward, forming in its course the Alpine nests and inaccessible retreats of Asturias and Galicia; while another, stretching to the eastward, covers with its various ramifications nearly the whole of Catalonia, and encloses in its bosom the admirable industry and persevering efforts of its hardy cultivators. In the interior of the hills which descend from the crest of the Pyrenees to the long vale of the Ebro, are formed the beautiful and umbrageous valleys of Navarre and Biscay, where, in mountain fastnesses and amidst chestnut forests, liberty has for six hundred years diffused its blessings, and the prodigy has been exhibited of independent privileges and democratic equality having been preserved untouched, with all their attendant security and general comfort, amidst an otherwise despotic monarchy. Beyond the Ebro, one great mountain range, stretching across from the frontiers of Catalonia to the neighbourhood of Lisbon, forms the almost impassable barrier between the valleys of the Tagus and the Douro,² and the provinces of Old

¹ Malte Brun, vii. 665, 666.

6.
Great mountain ranges of Spain and Portugal.

² Malte Brun, vii. 647, 651, 659, 664. *La borne*, i. 170.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

7.
Mountain
ridges in the
South of
Spain.1 Malte
Brun, vii.
494, 500.
Humboldt,
Geog. de
l'Espagne, in
Laborde, i.
170, 175.
Lord Caer-
narvon's
Spain, ii.
234, 270.

and New Castile, Leon, and Estremadura. Its western extremity has been immortalised in history; it contains the ridge of Busaco, and terminates in the rocks of Torres-Vedras.

Another, taking its rise from the high grounds which form the western limit of the plain of Valencia, extends in a south-westerly direction to Cape St Vincent in the south of Portugal, and separates in its course the outlines of the Tagus and the Guadiana. A third, also reaching in the same direction across the whole country, forms the boundary between the valleys of the Guadiana and the Guadalquivir, under the name of the Sierra-Morena, divides the province of New Castile from that of Andalusia, and has been immortalised by the wanderings of the hero of Cervantes. A fourth, detached by itself in the southern extremity of the Peninsula, forms the romantic mountains of Ronda, whose summits, wrapped in perpetual snow, withstand the genial sun which ripens oranges and citrons and all the productions of Africa on their sides. Two great and rich alluvial plains alone are to be found in Spain, the character of whose inhabitants differs from that of all the rest of the Peninsula: in the first of which, amidst water-melons, luxuriant harvests, and all the richest gifts of nature, the castanets and evening dances of the Valencians present the unforeseeing gaiety of tropical regions; while in the second, the indolent habits, fiery character, and impetuous disposition of the Andalusians attest, amidst myrtle thickets, the perfume of orange groves, and the charms of a delicious climate, the undecaying influence of Moorish blood and Arabian descent.¹

Spain has never been remarkable for the number or opulence of its towns: Madrid, Cadiz, Valencia, Barcelona, and Seville, the largest of which, after the capital, does not contain above an hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants, alone deserve the name of cities.* But it has

* Madrid contained, in 1808, 190,000 inhabitants.—*Edin. Gazetteer*, Art. Madrid.

The population of the principal Spanish towns in 1834 was as follows:—

Madrid,	201,000	Lorca,	40,000
Barcelona,	120,000	Jaen,	18,000
Seville,	91,000	Corunna,	18,000
Grenada,	80,000	Sanander,	18,000
Cadiz,	53,000	Ferrol,	13,000
Valencia,	65,900	Toledo,	15,000

in every age been distinguished beyond any other country recorded in history, by the unconquerable resolution with which their inhabitants have defended their walls, even under circumstances when more prudent courage would have abandoned the contest in despair. The heart of every classical scholar has thrilled at the fate of Numantia, Saguntum, and Astapa, whose heroic defenders preferred perishing with their wives and children in the flames to surrendering to the hated dominion of the stranger; and the same character has characterised their descendants in modern times.* With invincible resolution Barcelona held out for its rights and privileges, after Europe had adjusted its strife at Utrecht, and England with perfidious policy had abandoned her Peninsular allies to the arms of their enemies. The double siege of Saragossa, the heroic defence of Gerona, the obstinate stand at Rosas, have put the warriors of northern Europe to the blush for the facility with which they surrendered fortresses to the invader, incomparably stronger and better provided with arms and garrisons; while Cadiz alone of all European towns successfully resisted the utmost efforts of the spoiler, and, after a fruitless siege of two years, saw the arms even of Napoleon roll back.

The peculiar political constitution of the Spanish monarchy, and the revolutions which its inhabitants have undergone in the course of ages, have been as favourable to the maintenance of a defensive and isolated internal, as they were prejudicial to the prosecution of a vigorous external warfare by its government. Formed

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

8.

Extraordi-
nary resolu-
tion with
which in
every age the
Spaniards
have defend-
ed their cities.

Saragossa,	55,000	Alcala Real,	14,000
Malaga,	52,000	Port de Marie, near Cadiz,	17,000
Cordova,	46,000	Almeria,	19,000
Murcia,	35,000	Antequera,	20,000
Ecija,	34,000	Ronda,	18,000
Valladolid,	32,000	Velez Malaga,	14,000
Carthageana,	29,000	San Lucar,	16,000
Orihuela,	25,000	Xeres,	31,000
Alicant,	23,000	Tarosa,	13,000

—MALTE BRUN, vii. 661, 663.

* “Locum in foro destinant, quo pretiosissima rerum suarum congererent; super eum cumulum conjuges ac liberos considerare quum jussissent; ligna circa extruunt, fascisque virgultorum conjiunt. Fœdior alia in urbe trucidatio erat, quum turbam feminarum puerorumque imbellem inermemque cives sui cæderent, et in succensum rogi semianima pleraque injicerent corpora, rivique sanguinis flammam orientem restingerent; postremo ipsi, cæde miseranda suorum fatigati, cum armis medio se incendio injecerunt.” LIVY, xxviii. c. 22, 23. Numantia and Saguntum have become household words over the world, but the heroism of ASTAPA here narrated has not received the fame it deserves.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

9.

Peculiarities
in the civil
history of the
Peninsula
which have
rendered it a
divided com-
munity.

by the amalgamation at various times of many different nations of separate descent, habits, and religion, it has never yet attained the vigour and unity of a homogeneous monarchy. Its inhabitants are severed from each other, not only by desert ridges or rocky sierras, but by original separation of race and inveterate present animosity. The descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the Spanish soil are there mingled with the children of the Goth, the Vandal, and the Roman; with the faithlessness of Moorish, or the fire of Arabian descent. These different and hostile races have never thoroughly amalgamated. For many centuries they maintained separate and independent governments, and kept up prolonged and bloody warfare with each other; and when at length they all yielded to the arms and fortune of Ferdinand and Isabella, the central government neither acquired the popular infusion nor the inherent energy which is necessary to mould out of such discordant materials a vigorous state.

10.

It has never
been
thoroughly
amalgamated.

The example of Great Britain, where the various and hostile races of the Britons, the Saxons, the Danes, Scots, and Normans have been at length blended into one united and powerful monarchy, proves that such an amalgamation is possible: that of Ireland, where the Saxon and the Gael are still in fierce and ruinous hostility with each other, that it is one of the most difficult

- political problems. Without the freedom of the English constitution, which unites them by the powerful bond of experienced benefits and participated power, or the crushing vigour of the Russian despotism, which holds them close in the bands of rising conquest, it is hardly possible to give to such a mixed race the vigour of homogeneous descent. In Spain this had never been attempted, and if attempted, it would probably have proved unsuccessful. The Arragonese were jealous of the Catalonians; the Castilians despised the Valencians; the Galicians even were at variance with the Asturians; and the freeborn mountaineers of Navarre and Biscay had their local antipathies. All the inhabitants of the north regarded as an inferior race the natives of Grenada and Andalusia, where Moorish conquest had degraded the character, and Moorish blood contaminated the descent of the people; and where,

amidst orange groves, evening serenades, and bewitching forms, the whole manly virtues were thought to be fast wearing out under the enervating influence of an African sun.

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

But while these circumstances were destructive to the external vigour and consideration of the Spanish monarchy, they were, of all others, those best calculated to enable its inhabitants, when deprived of their central government and left to their own guidance, to oppose a formidable resistance to the invader. When deprived of the direction of their sovereign, the provinces of Spain did not feel themselves powerless, nor did they lose hope because it was abandoned by those who were their natural protectors. Society, when resolved into its pristine elements, still found wherewithal to combat; the provinces, when loosened or severed from each other, separately maintained the contest. Electing juntas of government, and enrolling forces on their own account, they looked as little beyond their own limits as the Swiss peasants in former times did beyond the mountain ridges which formed the barriers of their happy valleys. If this singular oblivion of external events, and concentration of all their energies on local concerns, was subversive in the end of any combined plan of operations, and effectually prevented the national strength from being hurled, in organised and concentrated masses, against the enemy, it was eminently favourable, in the first instance, to the efforts of tumultuary resistance, and led to the assumption of arms, and the continuance of the conflict, under circumstances when a well-informed central government would probably have resigned it in despair. Defeats in one quarter did not lead to submission in another; the occupation of the capital, the fortresses, the military lines of communication, was not decisive of the fate of the country; as many victories required to be gained as there were cities to be captured or provinces subdued; and, like the Anglo-Saxons in the days of the English heptarchy, they fought resolutely in their separate districts, and rose up again in arms when the invader had passed on to fresh theatres of conquest.

11.
Effect of
these circum-
stances in
promoting
the means of
internal and
separate de-
fence.

The nobility in Spain, as in all countries where civilisation and wealth have long existed, and the salutary

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

12.

Corruption of
the nobility,
and extent to
which entails
were carried.

check of popular control has not developed their energy and restrained their corruption, were sunk in the lowest state of selfish degradation. Assembled for the most part in the capital, devoted to the frivolities of fashion, or the vices of a court ; taught to look for the means of elevation, not in the energy of a virtuous, but the intrigues of a corrupted life ; they were alike unfit for civil or military exertion, and alone of all the nations must, with a few brilliant exceptions, be considered as strangers to the glories of the Peninsular war. Not more than three or four of the higher grandees were in the army when the war broke out in 1808 ; and the inferior noblesse, almost all destitute alike of education, vigour, or active habits, took hardly any share in its prosecution. The original evil of entails had spread to a greater extent, and produced more pernicious consequences in Spain than in any other country of Europe ; a few great families engrossed more than half the landed property of the kingdom, which was effectually tied up from alienation, and of course remained in a very indifferent state of cultivation ; while the domains of the cities or corporate bodies, held in mortmain, and for the most part uncultivated, were so extensive, that a large proportion of the arable land in the kingdom still remained in a state of nature.¹

¹ Foy, iii.
151, 152,
Jovellanos,
164. Laborde,
i. 197, 212.

13.

State of the
peasantry.

Notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, the elements of great political activity and energetic national conduct existed in the Peninsula. The peasantry were every where an athletic, sober, enduring race ; hardy from exercise, abstemious from habit, capable of undergoing incredible fatigue, and of subsisting on fare which to an Englishman would appear absolute starvation. The officers in the Spanish armies during the war, drawn from the ill-educated urban classes, were for the most part a most conceited, ignorant, and inefficient body ; but the men were almost always excellent, and possessed not only the moral spirit, but the physical qualities, calculated to become the basis of an admirable army. Colonel Napier has recorded his opinion that the Catalonian Miquelets or smugglers formed the finest materials for light troops in the world, and the Valencian and Andalusian levies presented a physical appearance greatly exceeding that of

both the French and English regular armies.* The cause of this remarkable peculiarity is to be found in the independent spirit and general well-being of the peasantry. Notwithstanding all the internal defects of their government and institutions, the shepherds and cultivators of the soil enjoyed a most remarkable degree of prosperity. Their dress, their houses, their habits of life, demonstrated the long-established comfort which had for ages prevailed among them; vast tracts, particularly in the mountainous regions of the north, were the property of the cultivators—a state of things of all others the most favourable to social happiness, when accompanied with a tolerable degree of mildness in the practical administration of government; and even in those districts where they were merely tenants of the nobility, the cities, or the church, their condition demonstrated that they were permitted to retain an ample share of the fruits of their toil.¹

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

¹ Lord Caernarvon's Spain, ii. 234, 360. Burgoigne's Espagne, i. 267; ii. 384.

The general comfort of the Spanish peasantry, especially in the northern and mountainous provinces, is easily explained by the number of them who were owners of the soil, coupled with the vigour and efficacy of the provincial immunities and privileges which, in Catalonia, Navarre, the Basque Provinces, Asturias, Arragon, and Galicia, effectually restrained the power of the executive, and gave to the inhabitants of those districts the practical enjoyment of almost complete personal freedom. So extensive were their privileges, so little did government venture to disregard them, that in many cases those enjoying them were to be rather considered as democratic commonwealths, inserted into that extraordinary assemblage of separate states which formed the Spanish monarchy, than as subjects of a despotic government. The classification of the population was as in the note below, which speaks volumes as to the condition of the people, and the causes of their prolonged resistance to the French invasion.²†

14.
Statistical details on that subject.

¹ Hard. x. 173, 174.

* I heard Lord Lynedoch, then Sir Thomas Graham, express this opinion in 1809, immediately after the retreat of Sir John Moore, in which he bore a part.

† Total inhabitants,	10,409,879
Of whom were Families engaged in agriculture,	872,000
.. Owners of the soil they cultivated,	360,000 †
.. Farmers holding under landlords,	502,000
.. Ecclesiastical proprietors,	6,216
.. Parish priests,	22,480
.. Regular clergy,	47,710

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

15.

The church :
its influence
and char-
acter.

But the peasantry, hardy and undaunted as they were, would have been unable to have combined in any effective league for their common defence, destitute as they for the most part were of any support from their natural leaders, the owners of the soil, if it had not been for the weight and influence of a body which, in every age, has borne a leading part in the contests of the Peninsula. This was THE CHURCH, the lasting and inveterate enemy in every country of revolutionary innovation. The ecclesiastics in Spain were very numerous, amounting, according to the census taken in 1787, to twenty-two thousand four hundred and eighty parish priests, and forty-seven thousand seven hundred and ten regular clergy belonging to monasteries or other public religious establishments.¹ The influence of this great body was immense. Independent of their spiritual ascendancy in a country more strongly attached than any in Europe to the Romish church, they possessed, as temporal proprietors, an unbounded sway over their flocks. As in all other countries, it had long been felt that the church was the best and most indulgent landlord ; the ecclesiastical estates, which were very numerous and extensive, were much better cultivated in general than any in the hands of lay proprietors ; and the tenantry held their possessions under them for such moderate rents, and by so secure a tenure, that they had long enjoyed almost the advantages and consideration of actual landholders.²

¹ Laborde, iv. 194.² Malte Brun, vii. 667, 672.

16.

Its immense
usefulness to
the people.

Nor was this all ; the charity and beneficence of the monks had set on foot, in every part of the country, extensive institutions, through which, more than any others by which they could be effected, the distresses of the poor had been relieved. They partook in a great degree of the character of the *hospice*, particularly in the northern provinces. To the peasant they often served as banking establishments, where none other existed in the province, and as such essentially contributed to agricultural improvement. The friars acted as schoolmasters,

Total cities, towns, and villages,	25,463
Of which were Free cities or burghs,	12,071
.. .. Subject to a feudal superior,	9,466
.. .. Subject to an ecclesiastical superior,	3,926

—See HARDENBERG, x. 173, 174.

The population is now 14,660,000.—MALTE BRUN, vii. 664.

advocates, physicians, and apothecaries. Besides feeding and clothing the poor, and visiting the sick, they afforded spiritual consolation. They were considerate landlords and indulgent masters; peace-makers in domestic broils, a prop of support in family misfortune; they provided periodical amusements and festivities for the peasants; advanced them funds if assailed with misfortune; furnished them with seed if their harvest had failed. Most of the convents had *fundaciones*, or endowments, for professors who taught rhetoric and philosophy, besides keeping schools open for the use of the poor; they also supplied parochial ministers when wanted, and their preachers were considered the best in Spain. Superficial or free-thinking travellers, observing that the aged, the sick, and the destitute, were always to be found in numbers round the convent gates, supposed that they created the suffering which they were so instrumental in relieving, and in consequence that the church was chargeable with the augmentation of pauperism; forgetting that the poor ever will be assembled together round those establishments where their sufferings are relieved; and that to represent such beneficent institutions as the cause of this distress, is just as absurd as it would be to decry fever hospitals because their wards are generally filled with typhus patients, or poor laws in Ireland because a large proportion of its *two millions* of present destitute inhabitants will hereafter infallibly be found in the neighbourhood of the workhouses where parochial relief is dealt out.¹

¹ Walton's
Revolutions
of Spain, ii.
374, 376.

It is observed with surprise by General Foy, that in every age the king, the church, and the people, have combined together in Spain: an alliance utterly inexplicable on the principles of the French revolutionary school, but susceptible of an easy solution when the benefits which the ecclesiastical bodies conferred both on the crown, in standing between it and the encroachments of the nobility, and the peasantry, in averting from them the evils of poverty, are taken into consideration. The whole course of events during the Peninsular war, demonstrated that this influence was established on the most durable foundation. Every where the parish priests were the chief promoters of the insurrection; it was their powerful voice

17.
Its great
influence in
the Spanish
contest.

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

which roused the people to resistance ; and many of the most renowned leaders of the desultory bands who maintained the contest when the regular forces were destroyed, came from the ecclesiastical ranks. The clergy, both regular and parochial, early perceived the total destruction of their interests which would ensue from the triumph of the French invasion ; they recollected the decrees of the Convention against the clergy, and the horrors of the war in La Vendée. And though Napoleon had to a certain extent restored the altar, yet they were well aware that even his powerful hand had been able to do this only in a very ineffectual manner. They knew that religion was tolerated in France, not re-established ; and that the indigent curés, who to the north of the Pyrenees drew a wretched pittance yearly from the public treasury, were very different, both in consideration and influence, from the dignified clergy in possession of their own estates, who formerly constituted so important a part of the French monarchy. It was this body, possessed of such influence, and animated with such feelings, who in Spain proved the real leaders of the people ; who, in the absence of the government, the nobility, and the army, boldly threw themselves into the breach ; and, organising out of the strength and affections of the peasantry the means of prolonged resistance, rendered the Peninsula the charnel-house of the French armies, and the grave of revolutionary power.

18.
Spain was
still unex-
hausted by
revolutionary
passions.

Most of all, Spain was still a virgin soil. Her people were not exhausted with revolutionary passions ; they had not learned by bitter experience the vanity of all attempts to regenerate mankind by any other means than the improvement of their moral and religious principles. Though the monarchy was gray in years, the nobility corrupt or selfish, the government feeble and incapable, the nation as a whole was still untainted ; the debility of the Bourbon reign had passed over the state without either weakening the force of popular passion, or destroying the fountains of public virtue. The peasants in the mountains, the shepherds in the plains, still inherited, in unmixed purity, the blood of the Cid and Pelajo ; still were animated by the spirit which sustained the conflict of seven centuries with the Moorish invader. They were

free from that last and worst cause of national corruption, which springs from the people having been themselves admitted to a share of power, participating in its passions, feeling its sweets, profiting by its corruptions. They were exempt from that despair which results from the experienced impossibility, by changing the class which governs, of eradicating either the vices of the governors, or the sufferings of the governed. Hence an intermixture in the Peninsular revolutionary war of passions the most opposite, and usually ranged in fierce hostility against each other; and hence the long duration and unexampled obstinacy with which it was conducted. While the rural population, at the voice of their pastors, every where took up arms, and rushed with inconsiderate zeal into the conflict, to combat under the banners of the Cross for their salvation, the indolent urban multitudes were roused not less by temporal ambition to league their forces under the national colours. The dissolution of government, the resolution of society into its pristine elements, had generally thrown political power and the immediate direction of affairs into their hands; revolutionary passion, democratic ambition, were called into activity by the very necessity which had every where thrown the people upon their own resources. The provincial juntas, chosen in the chief towns, soon became so many centres of revolutionary action and popular intrigue. And thus the two most powerful passions which can agitate the human heart, religious enthusiasm and democratic ambition, usually seen in opposite ranks, and destined to fierce collision in that very realm in future times, were for a season, by the pressure of common danger, brought to unite cordially with each other.

Such was the country which thereafter became the grand theatre of the contest between France and England; and such the eminently favourable battle-field which the unbounded ambition of the French Emperor at length afforded to the British arms. They now descended to the conflict on the *popular* side; they went forth to combat, not merely for the real interests, but the present desires of the people. The forces, indeed, which the contending parties could bring into this great arena were, to appearance at least, very unequal; and even the most sanguine

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

19.
Composition
and character
of the French
army at this
period.

CHAP.

LIII.

1808.

could not contemplate without alarm the enormous preponderance which weighed down the scale on the side of the Emperor Napoleon. He had six hundred thousand French soldiers, including seventy thousand horse, and at least a hundred and fifty thousand auxiliaries from the allied states at his disposal ; but the magnitude of this force, great as it was, constituted the least formidable part of its character.* It was the quality, experience, and spirit of his soldiers which formed the principal source of their strength. They stood forth to the conflict, strong in the experience of fifteen years of warfare, terrible from the recollection of a hundred triumphs. The halo of glory which surrounded, the *prestige* of victory which preceded them, was more difficult to withstand than either the charges of their cuirassiers or the ravages of their artillery. It fascinated and subdued the minds of men ; spread universally that belief of their invincibility which was the surest means of realising it ; paralysed alike the statesmen who arrayed nations and the general who marshalled armies for the combat ; and roused even in the bravest hearts the dispiriting conviction that the contest was hopeless, and that to sink honourably was all that remained to gallant soldiers. This feeling especially prevailed at this juncture, after the hopes of Europe, strongly elevated by the strife of Eylau, had been dashed to the earth by the wreck of Friedland, and the reserve of Christendom, on whom so many eyes had been turned in breathless anxiety, had abandoned the conflict as one apparently striving against the decrees of fate.¹

¹ Foy, i. 52, 53.

Nor was the actual efficiency of this immense army inferior to its imaginative terrors. Though the wars of Germany and Poland had made frightful chasms in the ranks of the veteran soldiers, yet the officers and non-commissioned officers, the bones and sinews of the army,

* The numbers were as follows, all paid by the French government :—

Infantry of the line,	380,000
Cavalry,	70,000
Swiss, Germans, Hanoverians, and Irish, in French pay,	32,000
Artillery and engineers,	46,000
Gendarmerie, coast-guards, veterans,	92,000
	<hr/>
	620,000

Besides the forces of the Confederation of the Rhine, Italy, Naples, Holland, and the Grand-duchy of Warsaw—at least 150,000 more.—See Foy, i. 52, 53.

possessed the immense advantage of tried merits and long experience. Such had been the consumption of human life during the late campaigns, that every conscript who survived a few years was sure of becoming an officer ; and while this certainty of promotion to the few survivors kept alive the military spirit of the whole population, it insured for the direction of the army the inestimable basis of tried valour and experienced skill. Every military man knows, that if the officers and non-commissioned officers are experienced and brave, it is no difficult matter, even out of the most unpromising materials, to form an effective army. The examples of the Portuguese and Hindoos, under British, and the northern Italians, under French officers, were not required to establish a fact illustrated by the experience of every age from the days of the Romans. This advantage appeared not merely in the field of battle ; desperate valour, fortunate accident, can sometimes there supply the wants of experience and organisation. But in the long run, in undergoing the fatigues of a campaign, in discharging its multifarious duties, and facing its varied difficulties, the superiority of veteran armies, or even new levies incorporated with a veteran frame, soon becomes conspicuous. The Spaniards never were a match for the French, either in regular combats or in the conduct of a campaign ; and although the native courage of the English, even in the outset, uniformly gave them the advantage in pitched battles, yet it was long before they became at all equal to their opponents in the general conduct of a campaign. It augments our admiration for the illustrious chief and his able lieutenants who ultimately led them to victory under such disadvantages, that they were compelled not only to lead, but in a manner to educate their troops in presence of the enemy ; and that it was while struggling to maintain their ground against superior bands of a veteran foe, that they imbibed in many respects even the rudiments of the military art.¹

The English army, however, at this period was far from being in the inefficient state, either with respect to discipline or experience, which was generally presumed on the Continent : and the French government, which judged from recent events, and were ignorant of the vast efforts

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

20.

Their discipline, equipment, and efficiency.

¹ Foy, i. 80.
81. Jom. ii.
36. Hard. x.
157, 158.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

21.

Force and
character of
the British
army.

in the military department which had been made since the commencement of the war, were equally mistaken as to the courage and capacity of the regular forces, and the extent to which a warlike spirit had imbued the nation. The British regular troops in the spring of 1808 consisted of nearly two hundred thousand men, of whom twenty-six thousand were cavalry: besides nearly eighty thousand militia, equal in discipline and equipment to the troops of the line, though not bound to serve beyond the British isles; and two hundred and ninety thousand volunteers, of whom twenty-five thousand were cavalry, in a very considerable state of efficiency.* Great part of this immense force, without doubt, was absorbed in the defence of the numerous and extensive colonies which formed part of the English dominions. But the official returns proved that a hundred thousand men, including twenty thousand cavalry, were disposable in the British isles: and in a minute made out by the Duke of York, it was proved, that "in 1808, sixty thousand men could have been provided for the campaign in Spain without detriment to any other service." Of this force it is not going too far to say that it was all in the highest state of discipline and equipment; and that not only was it equal for a pitched battle to any body of men of similar amount which could be brought against it, but, if all assembled, was adequate to the encounter of the largest army ever yet collected in a single field under the standards of Napoleon.¹

But it was not so much from underrating the numerical strength, as mistaking the spirit which animated

* The numbers, in July 1808, were:—

	Levies.		Militia.	Volunteers.	
	Infantry,			Infantry,	
The amount of the various branches.	Cavalry,	156,561	77,990	Cavalry,	254,544
		26,315		Artillery,	25,342
		<hr/> 182,876			<hr/> 9,420
	In all,	Regulars,			289,306
		Militia,	182,867		
		Volunteers,	77,990		
			289,306		
		In arms,	<hr/> 550,163		

Of this force of regulars, 81,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry were at home in the British isles, and of course disposable. In the muster-rolls of the English army, sabres and bayonets are alone estimated, which is not the case in the French and Continental services: a peculiarity which made the real strength of the English regular army about 200,000 men.—*Parl. Deb. ix. lii. App.*

¹ Parl. Returns, July 1807. Parl. Deb. ix. 3d App. and Napier, i. 81. App. and Foy, i. 210.

the British army, and the degree of interest which its exploits excited in the country, that the French government was led to regard too lightly the chances of success which it possessed in a continental struggle. With all his information and sagacity, Napoleon here fell into error in judging of the present by the past. The English soldiers had achieved so little during the war, that it was generally supposed they were incapable of doing any thing: their navy had done so much, that it was taken for granted the whole interest and pride of the nation were centred on its triumphs. In the interim, however, the general arming of the people, the excitement produced by the threats of invasion, the profound interest kept alive by the continental war, the triumphs of Maida and Alexandria, had awakened a most extraordinary degree of military ardour, and diffused no inconsiderable amount of military information throughout the people. The warlike establishments which pervaded the country were admirably calculated to foster this growing enthusiasm, and turn it to the best account in augmenting the numbers and increasing the spirit of the regular army. The militia served as an invaluable nursery for the line; the volunteers, changed soon after into local militia, corresponding very nearly to the German landwehr, provided a never-failing supply of recruits, tolerably instructed in the rudiments of discipline, for the militia. Numbers of young men of all ranks, caught by the animation, the idleness, or the dress of soldiers, embraced the military profession; thenceforward to the end of the war there was no difficulty whatever experienced in finding adequate supplies of recruits for the army, and filling up all the fearful chasms which war and disease made in its ranks. Thus, while the French were deluded with the idea that the English were altogether contemptible by land, they had already made great progress in the formation of a powerful army; and while their enemies were talking about sea-wolves and maritime skill, the spirit was engendered destined to produce the triumphs of Vittoria and Waterloo.¹

The vast ameliorations effected by the Duke of York in the discipline and organisation of the army, and the improved military education which the younger officers

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

22.

Admirable
spirit with
which it was
animated and
regarded by
the people.

¹ Foy, i. 210,
212, 220, 221.
Hard. x. 158,
159.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

23.
Character
and qualities
of the British
soldiers.

had now for some years received, had at the same period afforded increased advantages for the successful display of that physical strength and undaunted moral resolution which in every age has formed the great characteristic of the British soldiers. This invaluable quality gave them a very great advantage : it is the true basis of a powerful army. Skill, experience, discipline, can be superadded by practice, or acquired by exercise ; but if this one moral quality be wanting, all such acquisitions will prove of little avail. How inferior soever to their antagonists in experience, or that dexterity in the varied duties of a campaign which actual service alone can give, the English soldiers, from the very first, had the animating conviction that they were their equals, possibly their superiors, in actual combat ; and that all the advantages of their veteran opponents would be at an end if once they engaged in a regular battle. And so it proved even from the outset ; and it is inconceivable how soon this one quality of *dogged resolution in the field* came to neutralise all the superiority of acquired skill and veteran discipline. The military is essentially a practical art ; its wants and necessities are soon brought home by actual experience and suffering to an army in the field. If it possesses the resolution to fight, and the discipline to obey, a very short time will supply the rest. There is no education so rapid and effectual as that which takes place in the presence of an enemy.

24.
Parallel
between the
British and
French
troops.

Of various natural and acquired excellence, it is hard to say whether, in the Peninsular war, the British or French soldiers, after a few years, were the most admirable. In the service of light troops ; in undergoing with cheerfulness the fatigues of a campaign ; in dexterity at making themselves comfortable under privation ; in rapidity of firing, care of their horses by the cavalry, and enthusiastic gallantry at the first onset, the French troops for a long period had the advantage ; and this, joined to their almost invariable superiority of numbers, had ordinarily turned the general issue of the campaign in their favour. But when the hostile lines actually met, and the national resolution was fairly put to the test, the British soldiers from the very beginning successfully asserted their superiority. Splendid in appearance, overflowing

with courage, irresistible in a single charge, their cavalry could hardly be said to be equal—at least for general service, or the protracted fatigues of a campaign—to that of Napoleon : a remarkable circumstance, when the great attention bestowed on horses in England is taken into consideration. But their artillery, superior to any in the world in the admirable equipment of the guns and ammunition train, was second to none in the coolness and practice of the gunners ; and in the steadiness and precision of their fire, the constancy which they displayed under danger, their calmness in anger, and the terrible vehemence of their charge with the bayonet, the British infantry was beyond all question the first in Europe.¹*

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

¹ Foy, i. 226,
227.

In one important particular the English army was formed upon an entirely different principle from the French. In the latter the officers constituted in no degree a separate class from the soldiers ; the equality, which was the object of universal desire at the outset of the Revolution, and the conscription, which reached indiscriminately all ranks in its later stages, alike forbade any such line of demarcation. Thus, not only had all the marshals and generals in the service originally entered on the military career in the ranks, but to such as survived the rapid consumption of life in the imperial wars, promotion was still certain from the humblest station to the highest grades in the army. In the former, again, a line, in practice almost impassable, separated the private soldier from the officer ; they were drawn from different classes in society, accustomed to different habits, instructed by a different education, actuated by different desires. To the French conscript, glory, promotion, the prospect of ultimate greatness, were the chief stimulants to exertion ; in the English army, though the influence of such desires was strongly felt by the officers, yet the efforts of the common men were principally excited by a different set of motives. A sense of military duty, the wish to win the respect of their comrades, an instinctive principle of courage, an anxious desire to uphold the renown of their regiment,

25.
Important
effect of their
officers being
exclusively
taken from
the higher
ranks.

* “ *Le soldat Anglais,*” says General Foy, “ *possède la qualité la plus précieuse dans la guerre, le calme dans la colère.*”—Foy, i. 227.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

a firm determination to defend the cause of Old England, and an undoubting faith in the superiority of its arms, constituted the real springs of military exertion.

26.
The English soldiers were contented with their lot.

The great majority of the English soldiers felt no desire to be made officers; to become sergeants and corporals was, indeed, a very general and deserved object of ambition to the meritorious privates, because that elevated them in, without taking them out of, their own sphere in life; but they felt that they would be uncomfortable in the daily society of the commissioned officers, their superiors in birth, habits, and acquirements. And though many, in the course of the war, from the force of extraordinary merit, broke through these restraints, and some discharged in the most exemplary manner the duties of the most elevated ranks, who had originally borne a musket on their shoulders, yet in general the situation of privates who had risen to the officers' mess was not so comfortable as to render the change an object of general desire.¹

1 Duke of Wellington's Evid. on Military Punishment. Parl. Pro. June 1836.

27.
Which arose from the self-respect of all classes.

It may appear paradoxical to assert, but it is nevertheless strictly true, that this feeling of the propriety of each class striving to become respectable in itself, without seeking to overstep its limits, is the natural effect of long-established freedom and order; and is much more nearly allied to the genuine spirit of liberty than the feverish desire of individual elevation which, throughout all its phases, was the mainspring of the French Revolution. Where each class is respectable and protected in itself, it feels its own importance, and often disdains to seek admission into that next in succession; the universal passion for individual exaltation is the offspring of a state of society where the rights and immunities of the humbler ranks have been habitually, by all persons in power, trampled under foot. The clearest proof of this is to be found in daily experience. The men who throughout so many ages have maintained the liberties of England, are not those who were striving perpetually to elevate themselves by a sudden start above their neighbours, but those who, by a life of unobtrusive honest industry, have risen to comfort or opulence in their own sphere, without any desire to leave it.² And the strength of the state at present is not to be found in the anxious aspirants after

2 Foy, i. 226, 227.

aristocratic favour, or the giddy candidates for fashionable distinction, but in the unheeded efforts of that more numerous but unobserved class, which is too proud of its own rank to aspire to any beyond it.

An iron discipline had given the military force, thus constituted, a degree of firmness and regularity unknown to any other service in Europe. The use of the lash—that remnant of savage rule—was still painfully frequent; and instances were not uncommon of soldiers, for considerable offences, receiving five hundred, eight hundred, and even one thousand stripes—an amount of torture equal perhaps to any ever inflicted by the Inquisition. But though the friends of humanity beheld with horror this barbarous infliction, so foreign to the spirit of the English constitution, and one disused in the French and several continental armies; yet the experienced observers, who considered the character of the class from which the English recruits were almost exclusively drawn, and the impossibility of giving them the prospect of promotion which operated so strongly on French conscripts, still hesitated as to the practicability of abolishing this painful and terrible correction, though they strenuously contended for the limitation of its frightful barbarity. They regarded its disgrace as the price paid by the nation for the democratic economy, which denied to the soldiers such a pay as would secure for the ranks of its army a class with whom such inflictions might be unnecessary, or render expulsion from these ranks a sufficient object of dread; and that constitution which, by confining commissions in the military service to men of family and property, possessed of a permanent interest in the commonwealth, had obtained the best possible security against its force being applied to the destruction of the public liberties.¹

Better fed, clothed, lodged, and paid than any other in Europe, the English soldier had an attention devoted to his wants, both in health and sickness, and experienced an integrity in the administration of every department of the army, which could be attained only in a country where habits of freedom have long coexisted with those of order, and experience had pointed out the mode of effectually checking the abuses which invariably have a tendency to grow up in every branch of the public admini-

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

28.
Severe discipline. Corporal punishments which still subsisted.

¹ Duke of Wellington, *ut supra*.

29.
Physical comforts of the British soldiers.

CHAP.

LIII.

1808.

nistration. Pensions, varying according to the period or the amount of service, secured for the veteran, the maimed, or the wounded, an adequate maintenance for the remainder of life. True, he fought—in the glowing language of Colonel Napier—in the cold shade of aristocracy; true, he could not boast that the rays of imperial favour would be attracted by the helmet of the cuirassier, or the bayonet of the grenadier; but he was sure, from good conduct, of obtaining that respect in his own sphere, and those substantial advantages which were adapted to his situation and his wishes. Experience has abundantly proved that the concentration of government support on those whose only title to power is military distinction, is a sure prelude to unbridled administration; and that, if the soldier would no longer fight in the cold shade of aristocracy, the citizen would pine in the hopeless frost of military despotism.*

Nor was the inequality of force with which this great struggle was to be conducted, so great in its progress as it appeared in the outset. Napoleon indeed commenced

General Foy's
graphic con-
trast of the
English
and French
soldiers.

* General Foy has left a graphic picture of the different habits of the English and French soldiers during a campaign in the Peninsular war, of the truth of which every one must, to a certain degree, be convinced. "Behold," says he, "the French battalions, when they arrive at their bivouacs after a long and painful march. No sooner have the drums ceased to beat, than the havresacks of the soldiers, disposed round the piles of arms, mark out the ground where they are to pass the night. They put off their coats: clothed only in their great-coats, they run to collect provisions, water, and straw. The fires are lighted: the soup is soon prepared; trees brought from the adjoining wood are rudely carved into supports or beams for the huts. Quickly the simple barracks are raised; the air resounds with the sounds of the hatchet; while the soup is preparing, the young men, impatient of their idleness, clean their arms, arrange their knapsacks, clean their gaiters. The soup is soon ready; if wine is wanting, the conversation soon flags, and the noisy multitude is speedily buried in sleep. If, on the other hand, the generous fluid circulates, joyous looks follow the barrels as they are brought on men's backs into the centres of the rings; the veterans recount to the young conscripts the battles in which their regiment has acquired so much renown, and the universal transport when the Emperor, mounted on his white charger and followed by his Mameluke, suddenly appeared among them.

"Turn now to the English camp; you see the soldiers exhausted and motionless, reclining on the ground: are they waiting like the Spahis in the Turkish camp till the slaves prepare their victuals? No! they have made at leisure a very moderate march, and have reached at two in the afternoon the ground they are to occupy for the night. Bread and meat are brought; the sergeant makes the distribution; he tells them where they will find water and straw, and where the trees which are to be felled will be found. When the logs arrive, he shows where each is to be placed; he reprimands the unskilful, and stimulates the lazy. Where is the industrious enterprising spirit of that nation which has outstripped all others in vigour and intelligence? Out of their own routine the soldiers can do nothing: if once the restraints of discipline are broken, excesses of every kind are indulged in, and intemperance prevails to a degree which would astonish the Cossacks themselves. Nevertheless, do not hazard an attack unless you are well assured of success; the English soldier is not brave at times merely; he is

the contest with a hundred and fifteen thousand infantry, and sixteen thousand horse, in the Peninsula,* and the possession of all the most important strongholds which it contained; and the French force permanently maintained over its surface, after the British troops landed, exceeded two hundred and fifty, and rose at times as high as three hundred and fifty thousand men; while there never were so many as fifty thousand British soldiers in the Peninsula. Indeed the actual force under the standards of Wellington seldom exceeded thirty, and was generally for the first three years not above twenty-five thousand English sabres and bayonets.¹ Still this force formed the nucleus of an army which, with the addition of the

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

30.

Difficulty of keeping any considerable force together in the interior of the Peninsula.

¹ Nap. i. 47.
Foy, i. 203, 204.

so whenever he has eat well, drunk well, and slept well. Yet their courage, rather instinctive than acquired, has need of solid nutriment; and no thoughts of glory will ever make them forget that they are hungry, or that their shoes are worn out.²

“Nor is the difference less remarkable in the superior officers. While a French general of division is occupied during the leisure moments of a campaign in studying the topography of the country or the disposition of its inhabitants; in attending to the nourishment, drilling, or haranguing of his troops; in endeavouring to persuade the Spanish people to adopt the system of administration, or yield to the political conduct of his country—the English general opposed to him spends his time between the chase, riding on horseback, and the pleasures of the table. The first, alternately governor, engineer, commissary, has his mind continually on the stretch; his daily occupations lead to an enlargement of his intellect, and a continual extension of his sphere of activity. The other, as indifferent to the localities of the country in which he makes war, as to the language, disposition, or prejudices of its inhabitants, applies to the commissary to supply provisions; to the quarter-master-general for information concerning the country in which he has to act, and the marches he has to perform; to the adjutant-general for any other supplies of which he may stand in need. Unless when employed in a separate command, he seeks to narrow the sphere of his exertions and responsibility. He leads on his troops in battle with the most admirable courage; but in cantonments his habitual exertions are limited to superintending the police of his troops, seeing that their exercises are daily performed, and transmitting reports to his superiors.”³ Notwithstanding his admirable general candour, the French general appears, in this graphic description, to have been somewhat influenced by the prejudices of his country, though the outline of the sketch is undoubtedly correct. But the military is essentially a practical art; and notwithstanding all their riding and hunting, experience soon made the English generals as expert at all the really useful parts of their profession as the more inquisitive and instructed Frenchmen; and they are not the worst soldiers who, without disquieting themselves with the duties or designs of their superiors, are at all times ready with undaunted courage to carry them into effect.

* *Viz.* In Spain—

	Infantry.	Cavalry.
Dupont's corps,	24,428	4,056
Moncey's do.	29,341	3,860
Bessières' do.	19,096	1,881
Duhesme's do.	12,724	2,033
Imperial Guard,	6,412	3,300
In Portugal—		
Junot's corps,	24,978	1,771

116,979 16,901

Besides 44,374 infantry, and 4,685 cavalry, who arrived by the 1st August 1808 on the Ebro.—Foy, iv. Table 1, *Appendix*.

And of the officers of their respective armies.

² Foy, i. 231, 257.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

31.

Fortunate
position of
the British
troops.

Portuguese levies of equal amount, and disciplined and led by British officers, soon became extremely formidable.

Its fortunate central position in Portugal, resting on what became, under the tutelary genius of Wellington, an impregnable intrenched position in front of Lisbon, afforded to a commander of talent a favourable opportunity of striking serious blows at the enemy before their dispersed forces could collect from different quarters. If they did so, the insurrection burst forth again in the provinces they had evacuated; if they remained long together, famine, in an inland country so plentifully intersected by arid plains or desert ridges, soon paralysed any considerable offensive operations. The truth of the old saying of Henry IV., "If you make war in Spain with a small army you are beaten, if with a large one starved," was never more strongly evinced than in the Peninsular campaigns. Though Wellington frequently experienced this difficulty in the severest manner, when he advanced into the interior of the country, yet his army, in the general case, from the vicinity to the sea-coast of Portugal or the water-carriage of its principal rivers, was in comparison abundantly supplied with provisions; and though he was in general inferior in number to the enemy, sometimes to a very great degree, when he hazarded a battle, yet the discrepancy in this respect was never so great as the extraordinary difference in the sum total of the regular forces which the two nations had in the field might have led us to expect.¹

¹ Napier, i.
47. Foy, i.
204.

32.
Military force
of Spain at
the com-
mencement of
the contest.

The military establishment of Spain, when the contest commenced at the signal of the French cannon in the streets of Madrid on the 2d May, was by no means considerable. It consisted, in 1807, of eighty thousand troops of the line, besides sixteen thousand cavalry and thirty thousand militia; but the ranks were far from being complete, and the total effective force, including the militia, was under a hundred thousand men. From this number were to be deducted sixteen thousand under Romana in Holstein, six thousand in Tuscany, or on the march thence to the north of Germany, and the garrisons of the Canary and Balearic Isles. Thus the troops that could be brought into the field did not at the utmost exceed seventy thousand, of whom twenty thousand

were already partially concentrated in the Alentejo and Oporto, and the only considerable body of the remainder, about ten thousand strong, was in the lines of St Roque, at Gibraltar. The composition of this force was still less formidable than its numerical amount. Enervated by a long continental peace, the soldiers had lost much of the spirit and discipline of war; the men, enrolled for the most part by voluntary enlistment, and only in case of necessity, and in some of the provinces by conscription, were sober, active, and brave. But the officers were, in most instances, extremely deficient, both in the knowledge and proper feelings of their profession.¹

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

¹ Foy, ii.
216, 219.
Nap. i. 46.
Jom. ii. 51.

They were, indeed, for the most part, men of family—a certain proof of descent being necessary to obtaining commissions in two-thirds of the military offices at the disposal of government. But the restriction afforded no security either for extended information or generous sentiments in a country where four hundred thousand hidalgos, too proud to work, too indolent to learn, loitered away an inglorious life, basking in the sun, or lounging in the billiard-rooms or coffee-houses of the great towns. From this ignorant and conceited class the great bulk of the officers of all ranks were taken; not more than three or four of the high nobility held situations in the army when the war broke out. Leading an indolent life in towns, sleeping half the day in uncomfortable barracks, associating indiscriminately with the common soldiers, many of whom were superior in birth and intelligence to themselves, and knowing no enjoyments but idleness, gallantry, and billiards, they were as deficient in the energy and vigour which the Revolution had developed in the French, as in the sentiments of honour and integrity which the habits of a monarchy tempered by freedom had nursed in the English army. It was easy to foresee that no reliance could be placed, in a protracted struggle, on this debilitated force. Yet such is the importance of discipline and military organisation, even in their most defective form, in warlike operations, that the only great success achieved in the field by the Spaniards during the whole war was owing to its exertions.²

33.
Character
and habits of
the officers.

² Foy, ii.
216, 221.
Nap. i. 46.
Jom. ii. 52.

Though Portugal had a surface of only 5035 square

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

34.
Military
force and
physical
character of
Portugal.

geographical leagues, or 40,000 square geographical miles, being not quite half of the British islands, and a population of somewhat above three millions, instead of the twelve millions which were contained in Spain, yet it possessed in itself the elements of a more efficient military force than its powerful neighbour. The invaluable institution of *ordenanzas*, or local militia, had survived the usurpation of Spain; and during twenty-seven campaigns which followed the restoration of the independence of the country in 1640, it had rendered more important services to the state than the regular army. By the Portuguese law every person is legally obliged to join the battalions arrayed in defence of the country, from the age of eighteen to that of sixty years; these battalions consist of 250 men each, under the command of the chief landed proprietors of the district; and such is the native strength of a country so defended, that, with a very little aid from England, it had enabled the Portuguese for two centuries to maintain their independence. The physical peculiarities of the country rendered it singularly well adapted for the active operations of an irregular force of this description. Intersected in many directions, but especially to the north of the Tagus, by lofty sierras, terminating in sharp inaccessible cliffs, which rise, even in that favoured latitude, almost into the region of eternal snow; destitute for the most part of roads, and such as do exist perpetually crossing rivers without bridges, or ravines affording the most favourable positions for a defensive army; covered with Moorish towers or castles perched on the summits of rocks, or villages in general surrounded with defensible walls; inhabited by a bold, active, and independent peasantry, long habituated to the use of arms, and backed by impregnable mountain ridges washed by the sea, Portugal presented the most advantageous fulcrum which Europe could afford whereon to rest the military efforts of England.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, vii.
487. Nap. i.
26, 27. Foy,
ii. 1-80.

35.
General cor-
ruption and
abuses in the
military
establish-
ment.

But these advantages were all dependent on the physical situation and natural character of the inhabitants, or the consequences of the former and more glorious epochs of their history. At the period when the Peninsular war broke out, no country could be in a more debilitated state, as far as either political vigour or military effi-

ciency is concerned. Corruption pervaded every department of the public service, and to such an extent as to be apparently irremediable. The army, ill-fed, worse paid, and overrun by a swarm of titled locusts who devoured the pay of the soldier and did nothing, was both an unpopular and inefficient service. Forty thousand men, including eight thousand cavalry, of whom the troops of the line nominally consisted, might have furnished an excellent base whereon, with the addition of the militia and ordenanzas, to construct a powerful military establishment. But such were the abuses with which the service was infested, and the ignorance of the officers in command, that hardly any reliance could be placed on its operations; and it was not till they were recast in the mould of British integrity, and led by the intrepidity of British officers, that the Portuguese arms reappeared with their ancient lustre on the theatre of Europe.¹

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

¹ Foy, ii. 1,
88. Napier,
i. 27.

In the disposition of his forces when the contest commenced, Napoleon had principally in view to overawe and secure the metropolis, conceiving that Madrid was like Paris or Vienna, and that there was little chance of the country holding out for any length of time against the power in command of the capital. The Imperial Guards, with the corps of Monecy and Dupont, were assembled in that city or its immediate neighbourhood; and as this concentration of above fifty thousand men in the heart of the kingdom exposed the communication with the Pyrenees to danger, the Emperor was indefatigable in his endeavours to form a powerful corps of reserve at Burgos and Vittoria, under Marshal Bessières. With such success were his efforts attended, that by the beginning of June this able officer had twenty-three thousand men under his standards. At the same period the troops under Duhesme, in the fortresses of Barcelona and Figueras in Catalonia, numbered above fifteen thousand men, sufficient, it was hoped, to overawe the discontented in that province. Thus, after making every allowance for the detachments necessary to maintain the capital and frontier fortresses, and keep up the communications, fifty thousand men, including eighty guns, were ready in the north and centre of Spain to commence offensive operations—a force amply sufficient, if concentrated, to crush

36.
Amount,
quality, and
disposition of
the French
army at this
period in
Spain.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

any attempt at resistance which could have been made in the Peninsula. But the composition of these troops was very unequal ; and though the Imperial Guard and some of the veteran divisions in the capital were in the finest state of discipline and efficiency, yet this was by no means the case with the whole army. All, indeed, partook of the admirable organisation of the French service, yet the ranks were for the most part filled up with raw conscripts, hardly yet instructed in the rudiments of the military art. Had it not been for the excellence of the skeletons on which they were formed, and the officers by whom they were directed, the difference between them and the insurgent peasantry would not have been very considerable. They were very different from the soldiers of Austerlitz, Jena, or Friedland: the enormous consumption of life in those bloody campaigns had almost destroyed the incomparable army which, disciplined on the heights of Boulogne, had so long chained victory to the imperial eagles.¹

¹ Napoleon's
Notes, Ap.
No. 3.
Napier, vol.
i. Thiebault,
64, 72.
Napier, i. 47.
Duhesme's
Guerre en
Catalogne,
17, 21.

37.
Progress and
early forces
of the insur-
rection.

Such was the situation of the French army when the insurrection at once broke out in every part of the Peninsula. It burst forth with such force and unanimity in all the provinces, that it could not have been more simultaneous if an electric shock had at once struck the whole population. With the intelligence of the commotion and massacre at Madrid, a convulsive thrill ran through every fibre of Spain. The sense of their wrongs, the humiliation of their situation, the thirst for vengeance, broke at once upon the people, and one universal cry to arms was heard from one end of the kingdom to the other. Every where the peasantry met together in tumultuous crowds. From town to town, from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, the news flew with incredible rapidity ; and as the French troops, though in possession of the capital and frontier fortresses, were by no means scattered over the country, the proceedings of the insurgents hardly any where met with molestation. The fever was universal : the young and the old, the feeble and the strong, the shepherds of the mountains and the cultivators of the plains, the citizens of the towns and the peasantry of the country, all shared in the general transport. Arms were quickly sent for and obtained from the nearest depots in

the district; officers and colonels of battalions elected; provisional juntas of government formed in the chief towns to direct the affairs of the provinces; and, in the absence of all central authority, local governments soon sprang up in every part of the kingdom. Spain awoke from the slumber of centuries, and started at once to her feet with the vigour and resolution of an armed man. Passing over in disdain the degradation or insignificance of the Bourbon dynasty, the people came forth fresh for the combat, glowing with the recollections of the Cid and Pelajo, and the long struggle with the Moors, and the heroic days of the monarchy.¹

Nor was this extraordinary and unanimous burst of feeling lost in mere empty ebullition. Resolving, with a facility peculiar to themselves, into the pristine elements of the monarchy, the different provinces, with unparalleled rapidity, formed separate and independent juntas of government, which early gave a systematic direction to their efforts, and effected the formation of numerous and enthusiastic legions for their defence. It was easy to foresee how prejudicial to any combined or efficient general operations this unavoidable partition of the directing power into so many separate and independent assemblies must in the end necessarily prove. But, in the first instance, it tended strongly to promote the progress of the insurrection, by establishing in every province a centre of insulated, detached, and often ill-advised, but still vigorous operations. Before the middle of June, numerous bodies were raised, armed, and to a certain degree disciplined in all the provinces; and a hundred and fifty thousand men were ready to support the regular army. Even the presence of the French garrisons in the capital and the frontier fortresses, could not repress the general effervescence. Almost all the regular soldiers in Madrid escaped, and joined the insurgent bands of New Castile; under the very guns of their strong castles of Montjuic and St Juan de Fernando, alarming symptoms of disaffection appeared in Barcelona and Figueras, and their Spanish garrisons almost all made their escape to the enemy. Spain proved true to her old character; the lapse of eighteen hundred years had made no alteration on the disposition of her inhabitants.¹ "Hispania

CHAP.

LIII.

1808.

¹ Tor. i. 173, 178.
Duhesme, 10-12. Foy, iv. 52. Lond. i. 80.

38.
Vigorous efforts at first made for carrying on the contest.

² Tor. i. 173, 175.
South. i. 335, 337.
Duhesme, 11, 12.
Foy, iv. 32, 33.
Lond. i. 80, 81.
Napier, i. 52.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

39.
Frightful disorders which signalled the commencement of the insurrection in some cities.

May 26.

May 29.

sola omnium provinciarum vires suas *postquam victa est intellexit.*" *

In the northern provinces, especially Catalonia, Asturias, Leon, and Galicia, the insurrection took place, and the provincial juntas were established, in a comparatively regular manner, without any of the usual frightful ebullitions of popular passion. But it was far otherwise in the cities of the south and east of Spain. The usual vehemence and intemperance of the unbridled populace of great towns, was there increased by the fiery intermixture of Moorish blood. Frightful atrocities were committed. At Badajoz, the governor, who endeavoured to restrain the furious multitude which surrounded his house clamouring for arms, was dragged out and murdered; numbers were massacred, on the supposition of being agents or partisans of the French, at Carthagená, Granada, Carolina, Cadiz, and other places; and at Cadiz a fearful altercation took place between the governor, Solano, who refused to commence the hostilities which were required of him against the French squadron of five ships of the line, which had lain in the harbour since the battle of Trafalgar, and the ardent populace, who clamoured for an immediate attack. Independent of a secret leaning to the French interest, he naturally hesitated, as an officer of prudence and honour, at taking the decisive step of attacking, without any previous declaration of war or authority from the executive power, a squadron of an allied state which had taken refuge in Cadiz during the hostilities with Great Britain; and he openly expressed an apprehension that, during these dissensions, the English would break in and destroy the fleets of both contending parties. Finding that the popular effervescence was becoming too strong to be openly resisted, he endeavoured to temporise, called a council of war, and gave symptoms of submission to the public wish. But the populace, distrusting his sincerity, broke into his hotel, and chased him into the house of Mr Strange, an English merchant, where he was discovered by a set of bloodthirsty assassins, who dragged him from his place of concealment, notwith-

* "Spain alone of all the provinces knew her own strength after she had been conquered."

standing the courageous efforts of Mrs Strange to save his life, and massacred him while on the road towards the gallows. He met his fate with dignity and composure, bidding his heroic supporter, Mrs Strange, farewell till eternity. Don Thomas Morla, the second in command, was next day nominated to the government of Cadiz by popular acclamation, and immediately entered on the duties of his important office.¹

At Valencia the first burst of popular indignation was accompanied with still more frightful atrocities. Three hundred French merchants, or traders had long been established in that city, and when the insurrection broke out there in the end of May, they all, as a measure of precaution, took refuge in, or were sent to the citadel, where they were supposed to be safe from any violence that might arise. An ardent, resolute, and able Franciscan monk, Juan Rico, early acquired, by his powers of public speaking, the lead in the movement; but the junta elected for the government was composed, as in most other instances, of a mixture of persons of noble and plebeian origin. The people, however, from the first conceived a jealousy of the nobles; and to such a height did that feeling arrive, that the commander of the troops, Don Fernando Saavedra, was massacred before the eyes of the Count de Cervellon, a nobleman of the popular side, to whose palace he had fled for safety. This deed of blood was but the prelude to still greater atrocities, and the popular appetite for slaughter being once aroused, the multitude fell, as usual in such circumstances, under the direction of the most worthless and sanguinary leaders. In Valencia there appeared at this period one of those infamous characters who degrade the human race by their cruel deeds, and who is worthy of a place in history beside Robespierre, Collot d'Herbois, and the other political fanatics whose atrocities have for ever stained the annals of the French Revolution. Padre Balthasar Calvo, a canon of Madrid, denounced the fugitives in the citadel to the mob, as being in correspondence with Murat for the purpose of betraying that stronghold to the French troops. As invariably ensues in such moments of excitement, strong assertions passed for proofs with the multitude,²

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

¹ South. i.
341, 356.
Nell. i. 134.
143. Tor. i.
209, 214.
Foy, i. 201,
208.

40.
Massacres
with which
the revolution
in
Valencia
commenced.
May 24.

May 29.

June 1.
² Tor. i.
236, 240.
Foy, iii.
244, 246.
South. i.
363, 369.
June 5.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

and no difficulty was experienced in finding persons to undertake the most sanguinary designs. A general massacre of the unfortunate French was resolved on, and its execution fixed for the 5th June.

41.
Abominable
cruelty of
Calvo and
the insur-
genta.

Mingling perfidy with cruelty, Calvo, on the evening of that day, repaired to the citadel, and told the trembling inmates, who already had conceived, from vague rumours, apprehensions of their fate, that their destruction was resolved on, and that their only remaining chance of safety was to avail themselves of the means of escape which, from an impulse of Christian charity, he had prepared for them. Trusting to these perfidious assurances, the unhappy victims agreed to his proposal, and two hundred of them set forth by the wicket through the walls, which, according to his promise, was left open for them. No sooner had this flight begun, than Calvo, with a band of assassins, hastened to the spot, and spreading the cry that the French were escaping, so worked upon the passions of the populace assembled as to induce them to join his murderers, and they were all massacred without mercy. Wearied with slaughter, and yielding to the solicitations of some benevolent ecclesiastics, who earnestly besought them to desist, the assassins at length agreed to spare those who still survived in the citadel; but no sooner did Calvo hear of this returning feeling of humanity than he hastened to the spot, and conducted the remaining prisoners outside the walls to a ruined tower called the Tour de Cuarte. There he spread a false report that papers had been found upon them, proving a design to deliver up the citadel to the French; and the mob, again infuriated, fell upon their victims, and despatched them to a man.¹

¹ South. i. 363, 366.
Tor. i. 238,
240. Foy,
iii. 244, 246.

42
Deserved
punishment
of Calvo and
his associates.

Above three hundred French citizens, wholly innocent of the misdeeds of their Emperor, perished on that dreadful night. The junta were overawed; the magistrates of the city, elected by popular suffrage, proved powerless, as might have been expected, in repressing their excesses. Calvo, unopposed, drunk with blood, not only despatched his orders from the citadel during the whole massacre like a sovereign prince, but in the morning was named a member of the junta, at the very moment that Rico

was concerting measures for his apprehension, and took his seat, with his clothes yet drenched with gore, at the council-board of government! It affords some consolation to the friends of virtue to know, that the triumph of this miscreant was not of long duration. Excited almost to insanity by his execrable success, he openly aspired to supreme power, and had already given orders for the apprehension of the other members of the government, when a sense of their common danger made them unite, like the Convention on the 9th Thermidor, against the tyrant. He was suddenly arrested and sent to Minorca, before the mob, who certainly would have rescued him and massacred the junta, were aware of his seizure. There he was strangled in prison, and the government having regained their authority by this vigorous act, two hundred of his associates underwent the same fate. A severe but necessary deed of public justice, which at least rescued the nation generally from the disgrace of these atrocious deeds, and indicating a very different standard of public morality from that which prevailed in France during its Revolution, where not only were such crimes almost invariably committed with impunity, but their perpetrators were elevated to the highest situations in the state.¹*

These deplorable disorders sufficiently demonstrated that the best of causes could not obviate the dangers of popular insurrection, and that, unless the higher orders and holders of property early and courageously exert themselves to obtain its direction, a revolutionary movement, even when called forth by the noblest motives and in the national defence, speedily falls under the guidance of the most depraved of the people. But by adopting

CHAP.

LIII.

1808.

¹ Tor. i. 240,
244. Foy, iii.
246, 247.
South. i. 368,
370.

43.
Prudent
measures
adopted by
the nobles at
Seville.
Proceedings
of its junta.

* Only one prisoner escaped this hideous massacre. Chance had selected for his murderer a man whom he had frequently relieved in prison; the wretch recognised his benefactor, and though he twice raised his dagger to strike him, yet twice a sense of pity arrested his uplifted arm, and at length he suffered him to escape in the obscurity of the night among the populace. An extraordinary instance of presence of mind occurred in the daughter of the Count de Cervellon. The people, distrustful of their leaders, had insisted that the mail from Madrid should be brought to the Count, and the letters it contained publicly read; hardly was it opened when one from the *Auerdo Real* was discovered, to Murat, exultating himself from the share he had taken in the insurrection, and demanding troops. The courageous young lady, who was present, instantly seized the letter, and tore it in pieces in presence of the multitude, saying it related to her own private affairs; thereby saving the whole members of the junta from immediate death, though at the imminent hazard of her own life.—See SOUTHEY, i. 367; and TORENO, i. 234, 235.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

May 26.

May 27.

this prudent and patriotic course, the higher classes at Seville succeeded not only in preserving their own city from servile atrocities, but acquired an ascendancy which was attended with the greatest public benefit, and gave their junta almost the general management of the affairs of Spain. There, as elsewhere in the south, the public effervescence began with murder, and the Count d'Aguilar, one of the chief magistrates and most enlightened citizens, who became the innocent object of their suspicion, fell a victim to the ungovernable passions of the populace, who, when too late, lamented the irreparable crime they had committed. Speedily, however, the junta was elected; and happily, though all ranks were represented, a preponderance of votes out of the twenty-three members of which it was composed, was in the hands of the nobility. The wisdom of the choice which had been made soon appeared in the measures which were adopted. Immediately they despatched couriers to Cadiz and Algeziras to secure the assistance of the naval and military forces which were there assembled; and by the aid of CASTANOS, the commander of the latter, who was at the head of the troops before Gibraltar in the camp of St Roch, and who had already entered into communication with Sir Hugh Dalrymple, the governor of that fortress, the entire co-operation of the army was secured.¹

¹ Tor. i. 204, 206. Foy, iii. 201, 292. Espanol. i. 13.

44.
Fortunate
overthrow of
the extreme
democrats.

A violent demagogue, named Tap-y-Nunez, who had acquired a great sway over the populace, and who required that the nobility should be expelled from the junta, was arrested and sent to Cadiz; and this necessary act of vigour confirmed the authority of the provisional government. At its head was Don Francisco Saavedra, who had formerly been minister of finance, and P. Gil de Sevilla, who had both been sufferers under Godoy's administration; and the combined prudence and energy of their measures formed a striking contrast to the conceit, declamation, and imbecility which, in many other quarters of the Peninsula, afterwards rendered nugatory all the enthusiasm of the people. The regular troops were immediately directed towards the Sierra Morena to secure the passes; a general levy of all persons between the years of eighteen and forty-five was ordered; subsidiary juntas were formed in all the towns of Andalusia; the great

foundry of cannon at Seville, the only one in the south of Spain, put into full activity, and arms and clothing manufactured. War was soon after declared in a formal manner against France, and a manifesto issued, which not only eloquently defended the national cause, but contained the most admirable instructions as to the mode of successfully combating the formidable enemy with whom they had to contend. This declaration from so great a city, containing seventy thousand inhabitants, and embracing all the nobility of the south of Spain within its walls, was of the utmost consequence, and gave, both in reality and in the eyes of Europe, a degree of consistence to the insurrection which it could never otherwise have obtained.¹*

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

June 6.

¹ Foy, iii.
201, 203.
South. i. 342,
346. Tor. x.
204, 207, 215.
Espanol. i.
13.

The first important blow struck at the French was delivered at Cadiz. The fleet there, consisting of five ships of the line and one frigate, the only existing remnant of that which had fought at Trafalgar, early excited the jealousy of the inhabitants, to whom the French flag had become an object of perfect abhorrence; while Lord Collingwood, at the head of the English squadron which lay off the harbour, effectually prevented

45.
Capture of
the French
fleet at Cadiz.
June 14.

* In this proclamation, which may be considered as the national declaration of Spain against France, it was not less justly than eloquently observed—"The King, to whom we all swore allegiance with emotions of joy unprecedented in history, has been decoyed from us; the fundamental laws of our monarchy have been trampled under foot: our property, customs, religion, laws, wives and children are threatened with destruction. And a foreign power has done this: done it, too, not by force of arms, but by deceit and treachery; by converting the very persons who call themselves the heads of our government into instruments of these atrocious acts. It therefore became indispensable to break our shackles; and to put forth that noble courage with which in all former ages the Spanish people have defended their monarch, their laws, their honour, their religion. The people of Seville have assembled, and, through the medium of all their magistrates and constituted authorities, and the most respectable individuals of every rank, formed this Supreme Council of Government. We accept the heroic trust; we swear to discharge it; and we reckon on the strength and energy of the whole nation. We have again proclaimed Ferdinand VII. again sworn allegiance to him; sworn to die in his defence: this was the signal of our union, and it will prove the forerunner of happiness and glory to Spain.

Proclamation
of the Junta of
Seville against
Napoleon.

"The abdication, extorted by such detestable artifices from Ferdinand, was void, from want of authority in him who made it. The monarchy was not his to bestow, nor is Spain composed of animals subject to the absolute control of their owners. His title to the throne was founded on his royal descent and the fundamental laws of the realm. His resignation is void, from the state of compulsion in which it was made, from the want of consent in the nation to which it related, from the want of concurrence in the foreign princes, the next heirs in succession to the throne. The French Emperor summoned a few deputies, devoted to himself, to deliberate in a foreign country, and surrounded by foreign bayonets, on the most sacred concerns of the nation; while he publicly declared a respectful letter, written to him by Ferdinand VII. when Prince of Asturias, was a criminal act, injurious to the rights of the sovereign! He has resorted to every other means to deceive us; he has distributed, with boundless profusion,

CHAP.

LIII.

1808.

their departure. To withdraw as far as possible from the danger, Rosilly, the French admiral, warped his ships in the canal of Caracca to such a distance as to be beyond the reach both of the fire of the castles and the fleet; and at the same time endeavoured, by negotiating, to gain time for the arrival of the succours under Dupont, which he was aware were rapidly approaching through La Mancha and the Sierra Morena. Equally sensible, however, with his skilful opponent, of the importance of time in the operation, the Spanish general Morla insisted upon an immediate surrender, and constructed batteries in such places as to command the French ships even in their new stations. Lord Collingwood, who, with the English fleet in the bay, was an impatient spectator of these hostile preparations, offered the assistance of the British squadron to insure the reduction of the enemy; but the offer was courteously declined, from a wish, no doubt, that England might have no ground for any claim to the prizes which were expected. At length, on the 9th June, a sufficient number of guns being mounted, a heavy fire was opened upon the French ships, which, as they lay in a situation where they could not make any reply,¹ soon produced a sensible effect, and led to a negotiation that

June 14.

¹ Tor. i.

217, 218.

Foy, iii.

213, 214.

Collingwood,

ii. 43.

libels to corrupt public opinion, in which, under the mask of respect for the laws and our holy religion, he covertly insults both. He assures us that the Supreme Pontiff sanctions his proceedings, while it is notorious that he has despoiled him of his dominions, and forced him to dismiss his cardinals, to prevent him from conducting the government of the Church according to its fundamental constitution. Every consideration calls on us to unite and frustrate views so atrocious. No revolution exists in Spain; our sole object is to defend all we hold most sacred against the invader who would treacherously despoil us of our religion, our monarch, our laws. Let us, therefore, sacrifice every thing in a cause so just; and if we are to lose all, let us lose it combating like brave men. Let all, therefore, unite: the wisest and ablest, in refuting the falsehoods propagated by the enemy; the church, in imploring the assistance of the God of hosts; the young and active in marching against the enemy. The Almighty will vouchsafe his protection to so just a cause; Europe will applaud our efforts, and hasten to our assistance; Italy, Germany, the North, suffering under the despotism of France, will eagerly avail themselves of the example set them by Spain to shake off the yoke, and recover their liberty, their laws, their independence, of which they have been robbed by that nation."

Special and prudent instructions were at the same time given for the conduct of the war. "All general actions are to be avoided as perfectly hopeless and highly dangerous: a war of partisans is what suits both our national character and physical circumstances. Each province should have its junta, its generals, its local government, but there should be three generals-in-chief; one for Andalusia, Murcia, and Lower Estremadura; one for Galicia, Leon, the Castiles, and Asturias; one for Valencia, Arragon, and Catalonia. France has never domineered over us, nor set foot with impunity in our territory. We have often mastered her, not by deceit, but by force of arms; we have made her kings prisoners, and the nation tremble. We are the same Spaniards, and France and Europe and the world shall see we have not degenerated from our ancestors."

—*Proclamation of the Junta of Seville, June 6, 1808; Southey, l. 389, 393.*

Prudent
instructions to
their troops.

terminated in the unconditional surrender of the whole fleet five days afterwards. Thus was the last remnant of that proud armament, which was intended to convey the invincible legions of Napoleon to the British shores, finally reft from the arms of France, and that, too, by the forces of the very allies who were then ranged by their side for the subjugation of England.

In the northern provinces the insurrection spread with much fewer circumstances of atrocity, but an almost equal degree of enthusiasm. Excepting Barcelona, Figueras, San Sebastian, and a few other places, where the presence of the French garrisons overawed the people, they every where rose in arms against their oppressors.

A junta for the Asturias was formed before the end of May at Oviedo, the capital of that province; the first which was organised in Spain, and which thus gave to its inhabitants a second time the honour of having taken

the lead in the deliverance of the Peninsula. The first step of this body was to despatch deputies to England,

soliciting arms, ammunition, and money, whose arrival produced an extraordinary impression, as will immediately be shown, in the British isles. The junta of

Galicia, secure behind their almost inaccessible mountains, took the most vigorous measures to organise the insurrection; and not only arrayed all the regular soldiers at Ferrol and Corunna under its standard, but

summoned the Spanish troops, ten thousand strong, to join them without delay; a summons which was immediately obeyed by the whole body, who set out for

Galicia by the route of Traz-oz-Montes, and thus laid the foundation of a powerful force on the flank and rear of the invaders' communications. A junta was formed at

Lerida, which assumed the general direction of the affairs of Catalonia, and soon arrayed thirty thousand hardy mountaineers under the national colours; while, nothing

daunted by the proximity to France, and the alarming vicinity of powerful French corps, the Arragonese proclaimed Ferdinand VII. at Saragossa; and after choosing

for their commander the young and gallant Palafox, who had attended Ferdinand to Bayonne, and escaped from that fortress, issued a proclamation, in which they declared

their resolution,¹ should the royal family be detained in

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

46.
Insurrection
in Asturias,
Galicia,
Catalonia,
and Arragon.

May 24.

May 29.

June 2.
1 South. i.
337, 341,
372, 378.
Foy, iii.
190, 192.
Tor. i. 181.
195, 245, 250,
Napier, i. 57.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

captivity or destroyed by Napoleon, of exercising their right of election in favour of the Archduke Charles, as grandson of Charles III. and one of the imperial branch of the Spanish family.

47.
Measures of
Napoleon in
regard to the
insurrection.

From the outset Napoleon was fully impressed with the importance and danger of this contest, and in an especial manner alive to the vital consequence of preserving entire the communications of the army, which had been pushed forward into the very heart of the kingdom, with the French frontier. Murat, after the catastrophe of 2d May, had been taken ill and withdrawn from Madrid, and was on his route to take possession of the throne destined for him on the shores of Naples. He had been succeeded in the general direction of the affairs at Madrid by Savary. Napoleon, on his departure from Bayonne, spoke to him in such a way as sufficiently demonstrated his growing anxiety for the issue of the contest, as well as the sagacity with which he had already discerned in what way it was most likely to be brought to a successful issue.* Reinforcements were poured into Spain with all possible expedition; Burgos, Vittoria, and all the principal towns along the great road to Madrid from Bayonne, were strongly occupied; General Dupont, with his whole corps, was moved from La Mancha towards the Sierra Morena and Andalusia, in order to overawe Seville and Cordova, and if possible disengage the French squadron at Cadiz; and Marshal Moncey detached into Valencia, with instructions to put down, at all hazards, the violent and bloodthirsty revolution which had burst forth in that province.¹

¹ Sav. iii.
247, 249.
Nap. i. 59.

But while making every preparation for military operations, the French Emperor, at the same time, actively pursued those civil changes at Bayonne to which, even more than the terror of his arms, he trusted for subju-

* "The essential point," said he, "at this moment, is to occupy as many places as possible, in order to have the means of diffusing the principles which we wish to inculcate upon the people; but to avoid the dangers of such a dispersion of force, you must be wise, moderate, and observe the strictest discipline. For God's sake, permit no pillage. I have heard nothing of the line which Castanos, who commands at the camp of St Roch, will take; Murat has promised much on that head, but you know what reliance is to be placed on his assurances. Neglect nothing which can secure the rapidity and exactness of your communications; that is the cardinal point; and spare nothing which can secure you good information. Above all, take care to avoid any misfortune; its consequences would be incalculable."—SAVARY, iii. 247, 251.

gating the minds of men in the Spanish Peninsula. The Assembly of Notables met at that fortress on the 15th June, agreeably to the summons which they had received; and they comprised the principal nobility and a large proportion of the leading characters in Spain. Having been selected by the junta of government at Madrid, without the form even of any election by the people, they were entirely in the French interest, and the mere creatures of the Emperor's will. Their proceedings formed a singular and instructive contrast to the generous and fearless burst of indignant hostility with which the resignations at Bayonne had been received by the middle and lower orders through the whole of Spain. Even before the Assembly had formally met, such of them as had arrived at Bayonne published an address to their countrymen, in which they indulged in the usual vein of flattery to the astonishing abilities and power of the august Emperor, and strongly advised them to accept his brother for their sovereign.¹*

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

48.

Proceedings
of the
Notables
assembled at
Bayonne.
June 15.

June 8.

¹ Nell. ii.

214, 219.

Thib. vi.

395, 399.

South. i. 400.

The levees of Joseph were attended by all the chief grandees of Spain; every day appeared to add to the strength of the party who were inclined to support his elevation to the throne. All the principal counsellors of Ferdinand, Cevallos, Escoiquiz, and others, not only took the oath of allegiance to the new monarch, but petitioned to be allowed to retain their honours and employments under the French dynasty.† The Spanish corps in Holstein

49.

General
recognition
of Joseph by
the Spanish
Notables.

* "An irresistible sense of duty, an object as sacred as it is important, has made us quit our homes, and led us to the invincible Emperor of the French. We admit it; the sight of his glory, of his power, was fitted to dazzle us; but we arrived here already determined to address to him our reiterated supplications for the prosperity of a monarchy of which the fate is inseparably united with our own. But judge of our surprise, when we were received by his imperial and royal Majesty with a degree of kindness and humanity not less admirable than his power. He has no other desire but that of our preservation and happiness. If he gives us a sovereign to govern us, it is his august brother Joseph, whose virtues are the admiration of his subjects. If he is engaged in modifying and correcting our institutions, it is in order that we may live in peace and happiness. If he is desirous that our finances should receive a new organisation, it is in order to render our navy and army powerful and formidable to our enemies. Spaniards! worthy of a better lot, avoid the terrible anarchy which threatens you. What benefit can you derive from the troubles fomented by malevolence or folly? Anarchy is the greatest curse which God can inflict upon mankind; during its reign unbridled license sacks, destroys, burns every thing: worthy citizens, men of property are invariably the first victims, and an abyss of horror follows its triumphs." *Proclamation of the Grandees of Spain to their countrymen, dated Bayonne, 8th June 1808; NELLERTO, ii. 214, No. 70.*

Proclamation
of the Grandees
of Spain to
their country-
men.

† "The subscribers have given the strongest proofs of their fidelity to the former government; they trust it will be considered as the surest pledge of the

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

June 17.

June 10.

June 24.

¹ Thib. vi.
395, 401.
South. i.
400, 409.
Nell. ii. 214,
224, 226.

50.
Constitution
given at Bay-
onne by
Napoleon
to the
Spaniards.

took the oath of allegiance to Joseph ; but under a reservation that his appointment was ratified by a free Cortes, convened in Spain according to the fundamental customs of the monarchy. A proclamation was issued by the new king, in which he accepted the cession of the crown of Spain, made to him by his august brother Napoleon I., and appointed Murat his lieutenant-general. The consent of Russia was already secured to all the changes in the Peninsula ; and, in order to reconcile the other courts in Europe to them, an elaborate circular note was addressed to their respective cabinets, in which it was announced that "the occupation of the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal, the regeneration of these fine nations, the creation of the fleets of Cadiz and the Tagus, would be a mortal stroke to the power of England, and put the finishing hand to the triumph of the maritime system, in which all the continental powers were so warmly interested." Finally, on the 15th June, ninety-two deputies, out of the one hundred and fifty summoned, assembled at Bayonne, and formally accepted the constitution prepared for them by the Emperor Napoleon.¹

By this constitution it was provided that the crown was to be vested in Joseph and his heirs-male ; whom failing, in the Emperor and his heirs-male ; and in default of both, in the other brothers of the imperial family, in their order of seniority, but under the condition that the crown of Spain was not to be united on the same head with another. The legislature was to consist of a Senate of eighty members, nominated by the king : a Cortes composed of one hundred and seventy-two members, arranged in the following proportions and order ;—twenty-five archbishops and bishops, and twenty-five grandees on the first bench ; sixty-two deputies of the provinces of Spain and

Degrading
letter of
Escoiquiz and
Ferdinand's
counsellors to
Joseph.

sincerity of the oath which they now take of obedience to the new constitution of their country, and fidelity to the King of Spain, Joseph I. The generosity of your Catholic Majesty, your goodness and humanity, induce them to hope that, considering the need which these princes have of a continuation of *their services in the situations which they respectively held under the old dynasty*, the unanimity of your august Majesty will induce you to continue them in the enjoyment of the estates and offices which they formerly held. Assured thus of the continuance of the posts which they have hitherto enjoyed, they will ever prove faithful subjects to your Majesty, and true Spaniards, ready to obey *blindly even the smallest wish which your Majesty may express*." Signed SAN CARLOS, JUAN ESCOQUIZ, MARQUIS AVERLEE, and others, 22d June 1808.—NELLETO, i. 230, 251.

the Indies ; thirty of the principal towns ; fifteen of the merchants and manufacturers ; and fifteen of the arts and sciences. The first fifty, composing the peers, were appointed by the king, but could not be displaced by him ; the second class was elected by the provinces and municipalities ; the third was appointed by the king out of lists presented to him by the tribunals and chambers of commerce, and the universities. The deliberations of the Cortes were not to be public ; none of their proceedings were to be published, under the penalties of high treason ; the finances and expenditure were to be settled by them at one sitting for three years ; the colonies were constantly to have a deputation of twenty-two persons at the seat of government to watch over their interests ; all exclusive exemptions from taxation were abolished ; entails permitted only to the amount of twenty thousand piastres (£2,000) yearly, and with the consent of the king ; an alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded with France, and a promise held out of the establishment of the liberty of the press within two years after the commencement of the new constitution.¹

¹ See Constitution of Bayonne, Thib. vi. 402, 403 ; and Tor. i. 292, 295.

Every thing was conducted by the junta of Notables at Bayonne to the entire satisfaction of Napoleon. The grandees of Spain rivalled his own senate in graceful adulation of his achievements, in obsequious submission to his will. When the constitution was read to them, it was received with transport, and adopted by acclamation. Thunders of applause shook the hall when the new king made his appearance in his royal robes ; when he retired, two medals were unanimously voted to record the memorable acts of Bayonne ; and the assembly, in a body, hastened to the Emperor to lay at his feet the homage of their gratitude for the unparalleled services which he had rendered to their country. There was in the flattery of the Spanish nobles a mixture of studied servility with Oriental grandiloquence, which was novel and agreeable to a sovereign toward whom had been exhausted all the arts of European adulation.* Two days after, the new king set out

51.
Proceedings of Napoleon, Joseph, and the Junta of Notables, at Bayonne. June 26. July 7.

* "Sire!" said M. Azanza, the President of the Notables, "the junta of Spain has accomplished the glorious task for which your Majesty convened it in this city. It has accepted, with as much eagerness as freedom, the great charter which fixes upon a sure foundation the happiness of Spain. Happily for our country, an overruling Providence has employed your irresistible hand to snatch

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

July 9.

July 20.

Aug. 14.

July 26.

Aug. 1.

¹ See the
Letter in
Nell ii. 262.
Thib. vi. 406,
408. Tor. i.
294, 295.

for the capital of his dominions; he was accompanied as far as the frontier by his imperial brother in a splendid cortège of a hundred carriages, and crossed the Bidassoa amidst the roar of artillery and all the pomp of more than regal magnificence. On the 20th, Napoleon himself set out from Bayonne, having first given such instructions to Savary as he deemed sufficient to bring the insurrection, which had now broken out on all sides, to a successful issue; and returned by Pau, where he visited the birth-place of Henry IV., Bordeaux, La Vendée, the mouth of the Loire, Nantes, and Tours, to St Cloud, which he reached in the middle of August. Meanwhile, Ferdinand VII., resigning himself to his chains, wrote to the Emperor from Valençay, thanking him for his condescension, and requesting permission to meet him on his route to lay his homage at his feet,* which was not granted; and Charles IV., after testifying his entire satisfaction with the palace, parks, and country around Compeigne, requested permission, on account of his health, to pass the winter in a warmer climate, which was graciously accorded. In the autumn he moved to Marseilles, where he lingered out in ease and obscurity the remainder of his inglorious life.¹

The ministry appointed by Joseph, before his departure from Bayonne, was mainly taken from the counsellors of the Prince of Asturias; and this selection, joined to their ready acceptance of their new dignities, throws a dark shade of doubt over the fidelity with which they had served that unhappy prince during his brief but eventful

it from the abyss into which it was about to be precipitated. It is well that it was irresistible; for an inexplicable blindness has caused those who ought most to rejoice at this benefit to misapprehend it. But all Spain, Sire! will open its eyes. It will see that it required a total regeneration, and that from your Majesty alone it could obtain it. Public evil was at its height; the agents of a feeble government devoured the public patrimony, or extended unceasingly the limits of arbitrary power; the finances were a chaos; the public debt an abyss; the period of total dissolution was approaching. To what other power but that of your imperial and royal Majesty could it be reserved, not merely to arrest the evil, but entirely to remove it? Such are the wonders, Sire, which you have wrought in a few days, and which fill the world with astonishment."—SOUTHEY, i. 436, 437.

* "My uncle and brother have been equally charmed with myself at the announcement of the arrival of your imperial and royal Majesty at Pau, which brings us nearer your presence; and since, whatever route you choose, you must pass near this, we should regard it as a very great satisfaction if your imperial and royal Majesty would permit us to meet you, and renew in person that homage of sincere attachment and respect which we all feel, if it is not inconvenient."—FERDINAND VII. to NAPOLEON, 26th July 1808: NELLERTO, ii. 262. Napoleon, however, declined the honour, and never saw Ferdinand or any of his family more.

possession of the throne. Don Luis de Urquijo was made secretary of state ; Don Pedro Cevallos, minister for foreign affairs ; Don Sebastian de Pinuela, and Don Gonzalo O'Farrel, ministers of justice and at war ; Don Miguel Azanza obtained the colonies, and Mazaredo the marine. Even Escoiquiz wrote to Joseph, protesting his devotion to him, and declaring that he and the rest of Ferdinand's household "were willing to obey his will blindly, down to the minutest particulars." The Duke del Infantado was appointed to the command of the Spanish, and the Prince Castel-Franco to that of the Walloon Guards. Joseph entered Spain surrounded by the highest *grandeos* and most illustrious names of Spain. He reached Madrid on the 20th, having lingered for several days at Burgos and Vittoria, and received there the oaths of allegiance from the Council of State, the Council of the Indies, and that of the finances. His reception in the capital was melancholy in the extreme. Orders had been given that the houses of the inhabitants should be decked out to receive their new sovereign, but very few obeyed the injunction. A crowd assembled to see the brilliant cortège and splendid guards which accompanied the King, but no cheers or applauses were heard. Every countenance bore a mournful expression ; hardly any ladies appeared at the windows, notwithstanding the passionate fondness of the Spanish women for such displays. The bells of all the churches rang together, but they resembled rather the dismal toll at the interment of the dead, than the merry chime which announces a joyful event to the living.¹

To the honour of Spain and of human nature it must be stated, that, in the midst of this humiliating scene of aristocratic baseness, some sparks of an independent spirit were elicited, and some men in high station asserted the ancient honour of the Spanish character. When the Duke del Infantado, at the head of the *grandeos* of the monarchy, delivered their address to the new sovereign, he concluded it with these words :—"The laws of Spain do not permit us to go farther at present. We await the decision of the nation, which can alone authorise us to give a freer vent to our sentiments." No words can convey an idea of the anger of Napoleon at this unexpected reservation. Instantly approaching the Duke, he said, "As you are a gentleman,

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

52.

New Ministry of Joseph and his journey to, and arrival and reception at Madrid.

July 22

July 20.

¹ Thib. vi. 427. Tor. i. 355. South. i. 482.

53.

Honourable instances of resistance to the general torrent of adulation in his favour among the *grandeos*.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

you should conduct yourself as such ; and instead of disputing here on the words of an oath, which you will doubtless violate as soon as you have an opportunity, you would do better to withdraw at once, put yourself at the head of your party, and combat there openly and honourably. But you may rest assured, that if you take an oath here, and afterwards fail in its performance, before eight days you shall be shot." This violent apostrophe intimidated the Duke ; the address was corrected, and delivered in the form above mentioned, by Azanza ; but the Duke retained his opinions, and ere long appeared in the ranks of his country. The Council of Castile prefaced their address by the fulsome expression,—“Your Majesty is one of the principal branches of a family destined by Heaven to reign over mankind ;” but they eluded, by alleging want of authority, the simple and unqualified taking of the oath of allegiance. Jovellanos, who had been liberated by the resignation of Charles IV. and the fall of Godoy from his long captivity in the dungeons of Minorca, was offered by Joseph the portfolio of the minister of the interior. But the lengthened sufferings of that incorruptible patriot, under an oppressive government, could not blind him to the injustice now attempted by his deliverers, and he declared his resolution to abide by the fortunes of his suffering countrymen rather than accept wealth and greatness from their oppressors.* The bishop of Orense, when nominated as one of the junta to proceed to Bayonne by the regency of Madrid, returned an answer declining the honour in such independent and elevated terms as must for ever command the respect of the generous among mankind.^{1†}

¹ Tor. i. 281,
299, 413.
Pièces Just.

* “I am resolved,” said he, in reply to the reiterated instances of Joseph and his ministers, “to decline the place in the administration which you offer me ; and I am convinced that you will strive in vain to overcome the resistance, by means of exhortations, of a people so brave and resolute to recover their liberties. Even if the cause of my country were as desperate as you suppose it, it will never cease to be that of honour and loyalty, and that which every good Spaniard should embrace at any hazard.”—TORENO, i. 299.

† “Spain,” said this courageous prelate, in his letter to the junta at Madrid, “now sees in the French Emperor the oppressor of its princes and its own tyrant ; it feels itself enslaved, while it is told of its happiness : and these chains it owes even less to perfidy, than the presence of an army which it admitted to its strongholds when on terms of perfect amity. The nation is without a king, and knows not which way to turn. The abdication of its sovereign, and the appointment of Murat as Lieutenant-general of the kingdom, all took place in France amidst foreign armies, and under the eyes of an Emperor who conceived he was bestowing prosperity on Spain by placing on her throne a prince of his

Future ages will find it difficult to credit the enthusiasm and transport with which the tidings of the insurrection in Spain were received in the British islands. The earliest accounts were brought by the Asturian deputies, who reached London in the first week of June; and their reports were speedily confirmed and extended by further accounts from Corunna, Cadiz, and Gibraltar. Never was public joy more universal. As the intelligence successively arrived of province after province having risen in indignant fury against the invader, and boldly hoisted the flag of defiance to his legions, the general rapture knew no bounds. It was evident now, even to the most ordinary capacity, that the revolutionary ambition of France had brought it into violent collision with the patriotic and religious feelings of a high-spirited and virgin people. "Never," says Southey, "since the glorious morning of the French Revolution, before one bloody cloud had risen to overcast the deceitful promise of its beauty, had the heart of England been affected by so generous and universal a joy." All classes joined in it; all degrees of intellect were swept away by the flood. The aristocratic party who had so long struggled, with almost hopeless constancy, against the ever-advancing wave of revolutionary ambition, rejoiced that it had at last broke on a rugged shore; and that, in the insolence of apparently unbounded power, it had proceeded to such extremities as had roused the impassioned resistance of a gallant people.¹

The lovers of freedom hailed the Peninsular contest as the first real effort of THE PEOPLE in the war. Former contests had lain between cabinets and armies on the one side, and democratic zeal, ripened into

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

54.

Universal joy with which the news of the insurrection is received in England.

¹ South. i.
443, 444.
Ann. Reg.
1808, 193.

own family. The supreme junta has against it a thousand rumours, besides its armed president, and the troops which surround it; all which forbids its acts being regarded as those of a free assembly. The same may be said of the councils and tribunals of justice. What a chaos of confusion, of misfortunes to Spain! and will these misfortunes be avoided by an assembly held without the kingdom, convened in a situation where its deliberations can never be regarded as free? And if to the tumultuous movements which menace the interior of the kingdom, we add the pretensions of princes and powers abroad, and the probable intervention of a foreign armed force in the contest of which the Peninsula will soon be the theatre, what can be imagined more frightful, or more worthy of pity? Cannot the love and solicitude of the Emperor find some other mode of manifesting itself than by such measures as will lead to its ruin rather than its cure?"—*Answer of PEDRO, Bishop of Orense, to the Junta of Government at Madrid, which had named him as representative at Bayonne, May 29, 1808; TORENO, I. 413, 414; P'ces Just.*

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

55.
Enthusiasm
of the popular
party in the
cause.

military prowess, on the other: but now the case was changed. It was no longer a struggle for the power of kings or the privileges of nobles; the energy of the multitude was roused into action, the spirit of liberty was enlisted in the cause; the mighty lever which had shaken all the thrones of Europe had now, by the imprudence of him who wielded it, fallen into the hands of the enemy; it would cast down the fabric of imperial, as it had done that of regal power. With honest zeal and fervent sympathy, the great body of the British people united heart and soul with the gallant nation which, with generous, perhaps imprudent, enthusiasm, had rushed into the contest for their country's independence, and loudly called on the government to take their station by their side, and stake all upon the issue of so heart-stirring a conflict. Meanwhile the few sagacious and well-informed observers, whom the general transport permitted to take a cool survey of the probable issue of the contest, observed with satisfaction that the ambition of the French Emperor had at length offered a sea-girt and mountainous region for a battle-field, where the numerical inferiority of the British armies would expose them to less disadvantage than in any other theatre of European warfare.¹

¹ South. i.
443, 444.
Ann. Reg.
1808, 193,
195.

56.
Noble speech
of Mr Sheri-
dan on the
Spanish war
in parliament.
June 15.

The first notice taken of these animating events in the British parliament was on the 15th June, when the subject was introduced in a splendid speech by Mr Sheridan, which merely embodied, in glowing language, the feelings which then, with unprecedented unanimity, agitated the British heart. "Never before," he exclaimed, "has so happy an opportunity existed for Great Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world. Hitherto Buonaparte has run a victorious race, because he has contended with princes without dignity, ministers without wisdom, or people without patriotism; he has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated with one spirit against him. Now is the time to stand up boldly and fairly for the deliverance of Europe; and if the ministry will co-operate effectually with the Spanish patriots, they shall receive from me as cordial a support as if the man ² whom I most loved were restored to life. Will not the animation of the Spanish mind be excited by the knowledge that their cause is espoused,

² Mr Fox.

not by the ministers merely, but by the parliament and the people of England? If there be a disposition in Spain to resent the insults and injuries, too enormous to be described by language, which they have endured from the tyrant of the earth, will not that disposition be roused to the most sublime exertion by the assurance that their efforts will be cordially aided by a great and powerful nation? Never was any thing so brave, so noble, so generous, as the conduct of the Spaniards; never was there a more important crisis than that which their patriotism has thus occasioned to the state of Europe. Instead of striking at the core of the evil, the administrations of this country have hitherto gone on nibbling merely at the rind; filching sugar islands, but neglecting all that was dignified and consonant to the real interests of the country. Now, therefore, is the moment to let the world know that we are resolved to stand up, firmly and fairly, for the salvation of Europe. Let us then co-operate with the Spaniards, but co-operate in an effectual and energetic way; and if we find that they are really resolved to engage heart and soul in the enterprise, advance with them in a magnanimous way and with an undaunted step for the liberation of mankind. Formerly, the contest in La Vendée afforded the fairest chance of effecting the deliverance of Europe; but that favourable chance was neglected by this country. What was then neglected was now looked up to with sanguine expectation; the only hope now was that Spain might prove another La Vendée. Above all, let us mix no little interests with this mighty contest; let us discard or forget British objects, and conduct the war on the great principles of generous support and active co-operation." ¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xi. 885, 889

These noble sentiments, worthy of the real friends of freedom and the leaders of the liberal party in its last asylum, were fully responded to by the members of administration. Mr Secretary Canning replied,—“His Majesty’s ministers see with as deep and lively an interest as my right honourable friend the noble struggle which the Spanish nation are now making to resist the unexampled atrocity of France, and preserve the independence of their country; and there exists the strongest disposition on the part of the British government to

57.
Reply of Mr
Secretary
Canning.

CHAP.
LIII.

1808.

afford every practicable aid in a contest so magnanimous. In endeavouring to afford this aid, it will never occur to us to consider that a state of war exists between this country and Spain. Whenever any nation in Europe starts up with a determination to oppose a power which, whether professing insidious peace or declaring open war, is alike the common enemy of all other people, that nation, whatever its former relation may be, becomes, *ipso facto*, the ally of Great Britain. In furnishing the aid which may be required, government will be guided by three principles—to direct the united efforts of both countries against the common foe—to direct them in such a way as shall be most beneficial to our new ally—and to such objects as may be most conducive to British interests. But of these objects the last will never be allowed to come into competition with the other two. I mention British objects, chiefly for the purpose of disclaiming them as any material part of the considerations which influence the British government. No interest can be so purely British as Spanish success; no conquest so advantageous to England as conquering from France the complete integrity of Spanish dominions in every quarter of the globe.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xi. 890, 891,
895.

58.
Reflections
on this
debate.

This debate marks in more ways than one an important era in the war, and indicates a remarkable change in the sentiments with which it was regarded by a large portion of the liberal party in the British dominions. There were no longer any apologies for Napoleon, or the principles of the Revolution; no deprecation of any attempt to resist the power of France, as in the earlier periods of the war. The eloquent declamations of Mr Fox and Mr Erskine in favour of the great republic—their sophistical excuses for the grasping ambition in which its fervour had terminated—had expired. Experience and suffering, danger and difficulty, had in a great degree subdued even political passion—the strongest feeling, save religious, which can agitate mankind. Mr Sheridan and Mr Wyndham from the *Opposition* benches, earnestly called on the government to engage deeply in the war; they loudly and justly condemned the selfish policy and Lilliputian expeditions of the aristocratic government in its earlier years, and demanded, in the

name of public freedom, that England should at last take her appropriate place in the van of the conflict, and, disregarding all selfish or exclusively national objects, stand forth with all her might for the deliverance of mankind.

In such sentiments from such men, none but the vulgar and superficial could see any inconsistency with their former opinions. Whatever others might do, it was not to be supposed that the highest intellects and most generous hearts in the empire were to gaze all day at the East in hopes of still seeing the sun rise. Resistance to French despotism and invasion was not only not inconsistent with, but necessarily flowed from, the real principles of the ardent philanthropists who had formerly opposed the overshadowing what they then deemed the brilliant dawn of the French Revolution. But it had the appearance of change to the numerous class who judge by words instead of things, and are attached, not to abstract principles, but actual parties; and, therefore, the enunciation of such sentiments by any of the Whig leaders not only was an honourable instance of moral courage, but evinced a remarkable change in the general feeling of their party. Not less clearly was the disclaiming of interested views or British objects by the ministerial chiefs, an indication of the arrival of that period in the contest, when the generous passions were at length aroused, and the fervent warmth of popular feeling had melted or overcome that frigid attention to interested objects, which, not less than their tenacity and perseverance, is the uniform characteristic of aristocratic governments among mankind.

Animated by such powerful support, from the quarter where it was least expected, to enter vigorously into the contest, the English government made the most liberal provision for its prosecution. The supplies voted for the war-charges amounted to the enormous sum of £48,300,000; to meet which, ways and means to the value of £48,400,000, were voted by parliament; and the total income of the year 1808, including the ordinary and permanent revenue, was estimated at £86,780,000, and the expenditure £84,797,000. The loan was £10,102,000 for England, and £2,000,000 for Ireland, and the new taxes imposed only £300,000; the Chancellor of the Exchequer having adhered, in a great

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

59.
Consistence
of these views
with the true
principles of
freedom.

60.
English
Budget for
1808.

CHAP.
LIII.
1808.

April 14.
1 Parl. Deb.
xi. 14, 21,
and App. No.
1. Ann. Reg.
1808, 103.
105. Mar-
shall's Tables.
Statement,
No. 1.

measure, to the system approved of by both sides of the House in the finance debates of the preceding year, of providing for the increased charges of the year and the interest of the loans, in part at least, by an impignoration, in time of peace, of the war taxes. A subsidy of £1,100,000 was provided for the King of Sweden. But these sums, great as they are, convey no adequate idea of the expenditure of this eventful year; the budget was arranged in April, before the Spanish contest had arisen; and for the vast expenses with which it was attended, and which, not having been foreseen, had not been provided for, there was no resource but a liberal issue of Exchequer bills, which fell as an oppressive burden upon future years.^{1*}

61.
Immense
extent of the
supplies
which were
sent out to
Spain from
Great
Britain.

The supplies of all sorts sent out during this year to the Spanish patriots, though in great part misapplied or wasted, were on a princely scale of liberality, and worthy of the exalted station which, by consent of all parties, England now took at the head of the alliance. In every province of the Peninsula juntas were established, and to all British envoys were sent, who made as minute inquiries into the wants and capabilities of the district as the circumstances would admit, and received ample powers from government to afford such aid, either in money, arms, clothing, or warlike stores, as they deemed it expedient to demand. Supplies of all sorts were, in consequence of these requisitions, sent to Corunna, Santander, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Valencia, Malaga, and other places, with a profusion which astonished the inhabitants, and gave them at least ample means to fit themselves out for the contest in which they were engaged.† It may readily be conceived, that from the enthusiasm and animation of the insurgent provinces, and the uni-

* Appendix A, chap. LIII.

† The following is a statement of the sums of money and warlike stores sent by Great Britain to the Peninsula, from the beginning of the contest in June 1808, to the commencement of 1809:—

Subsidies in money,		£3,100,000		
Pieces of cannon,	98		Pikes,	79,000
Cannon-balls,	31,000		Cartridges,	23,477,000
Mortars,	38		Lead balls,	6,000,000
Mortar charges,	7,200		Barrels of powder,	15,400
Cartronades,	80		Haversacks,	34,000
Muskets,	200,177		Canteens,	50,000
Carbines,	220		Infantry accoutrements,	39,000
Sabres,	61,300		Tents,	40,000

versal transport with which the British envoys were received, abundance of room was afforded for misrepresentation or delusion; that the accounts transmitted to government must, in many cases, have been inaccurate; and that, amidst the extraordinary profusion with which supplies of all sorts were poured into the country, there were many opportunities afforded to the native authorities of fraud or embezzlement, of which, amidst the general confusion, they were not slow to avail themselves. In truth, lamentable experience afterwards demonstrated that great part of these magnificent supplies was misapplied or neglected; the money being squandered or secreted, the stores sold or wasted, the arms piled and forgotten in magazines, when the patriots in the field were in want of the most necessary part of military equipment.¹

Still, with all these evils, inseparable probably from the condition of a country thus driven into a dreadful contest in the absence of any regular government, and unavoidably thrown under the direction of local and recently elected authorities, alike destitute of the knowledge, unacquainted with the arrangements, and relieved from the responsibility requisite for the faithful discharge of official duty, the prodigal bounty of England was attended with the most important effects upon the progress of the strife. It removed at once the imputation of cautious and prudential policy, which the incessant declamations of the French writers during the former periods of the war, joined to the feeble temporising measures of preceding cabinets, had so strongly affixed to the British name. It demonstrated the sincerity and energy of a cabinet which thus, with unprecedented profusion, spread abroad in every quarter the means of resistance; and inspired boundless confidence in the resources of a power which, great at all times, seemed capable of gigantic expansion at the decisive moment, and appeared rather to have increased than di-

Field equipages,	10,000
Ells of linen,	113,000
— of cloth,	125,000
— of cotton,	82,000
Cloaks,	50,000
Coats and Trowsers,	92,000

Shirts,	35,000
Cotton, pieces,	22,000
Pairs of Shoes,	96,000
Soles of Shoes,	15,000
Hats and bonnets,	16,000
Cartridge-boxes,	240,000

—See *Parl. Pap.*, July 16, 1808, and *HARD* x. 492; *Pièces Just.*

In addition to these immense national supplies, private subscriptions were entered into in the chief towns of the empire, and large sums collected and remitted from the British Islands to the Spanish patriots.—*Annual Register*, 1808, 195.

CHAP.
LIII.

• 1808.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1808, 184.
Hard. x. 190,
192. Lond. i.
102.

62.
Beneficial
effects with
which these
efforts were
attended.

² Tor. i. 301,
307. Ann.
Reg. 1808,
194. Hard. x.
191, 193, 236.
Lond. i. 102.

CHAPTER LIV.

NAPOLEON'S FIRST DISASTERS IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.
1.
Military
measures
adopted by
Napoleon
against the
insurrection.

No sooner was Napoleon made aware, by the general progress and formidable character of the insurrection, that a serious contest awaited him, than he set about, with all his usual caution and ability, preparing the means of overcoming its difficulties. Bessières received orders to put Burgos into a state of defence, to detach Lefebvre Desnouettes, with five thousand foot and eight hundred horse, against Saragossa, and to move his main body so as to overawe the insurgents in Biscay, Asturias, and Old Castile. A reinforcement of nine thousand men was prepared for Duhesme in Catalonia, which it was hoped would enable him to make head against the enemy in that quarter. A reserve was organised, under General Drouet, on the Pyrenean frontier of Navarre, which, besides affording Bessières continual additions of force, placed five thousand men in the openings of the valleys towards the castle of Jaca, which was in possession of the enemy; another reserve was established in Perpignan, and detachments were stationed in the eastern passes of the mountains. The communications and rear being thus adequately provided for, Marshal Monecy was directed, with part of his corps, to move upon Cuença, so

¹ Napoleon's as to prevent any communication between the patriots of Valencia and Saragossa, and subsequently threaten the former city; while Dupont, with two divisions of his corps, ten thousand strong, received orders to proceed across the Sierra Morena towards Cordova and Seville.¹ The remainder of his corps and of that of Monecy was

¹ Napoleon's Orders.
Napier, i. App. No. 2.
Ibid. i. 60.
Foy, iii. 265, 268.

stationed in reserve in La Mancha to keep up the communications of the divisions pushed forward, and be in readiness, if necessary, to support either which might require assistance. With so much foresight and caution did the great commander distribute his forces, even against an insurgent peasantry, and an enemy at that period deemed wholly unable to withstand the shock of his veteran legions.

The first military operations of any importance were those of Marshal Bessières in Biscay and Old Castile. That able officer was at Burgos with twelve thousand men, when the insurrection broke out with great violence in all directions around him. At the same moment he received advices that a body of five thousand armed men had got possession of the important depot of artillery at Segovia, and another assemblage of equal force was arming itself from the royal manufactory of arms at Palencia; while General Cuesta, the captain-general of the province, with a few regiments of regular troops and a strong body of undisciplined peasantry, had taken post at Cabeçon on the Pisuerga. These positions appeared to Savary, who was now the chief in command at Madrid, so alarming, as threatening the communications of the French with the capital and all the southern provinces, that he detached General Frère with his division, forming part of Dupont's corps, in all haste to Segovia, where he routed the peasantry, and made himself master of all the artillery they had taken from the arsenal, amounting to thirty pieces. Meanwhile Bessières divided his disposable force into several movable columns, which, issuing from Burgos as a centre, traversed the country in all directions, every where defeating and disarming the insurgents, and reinstating the French authorities whom they had dispossessed. One of these divisions, under Verdier, routed the enemy at Logrono, and with inhuman and unjustifiable cruelty put all their leaders to death; another under Lasalle, broke the armed peasantry at Torquemada, burned the town, pursued them with merciless severity, and entered Palencia on the day following; while a third, under Merle, uniting with Lasalle, made straight for Cuesta at Cabeçon,¹ who accepted battle, but was speedily overthrown, and his whole new levies dispersed,

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

2.
Successful operations of Bessières and Frère in Old Castile and Leon against the insurgents.

June 6.

June 6.

June 7.

June 12.
1 Napier, i.
62, 63. Foy.
iii. 269. Tor.
i. 300.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

3.

Which had
the effect of
entirely sub-
duing that
part of the
country.

with the loss of all their artillery and several thousand muskets, which were thrown away in the pursuit.

By these successes the whole level country in the upper part of the valley of the Douro was overawed and reduced to submission. Segovia, Valladolid, Palencia, and all the principal towns which had revolted, were compelled to send deputies to take the oath of allegiance to Joseph; and the terrible French dragoons, dispersing through the smaller towns and villages, diffused such universal consternation, that all the flat country in this quarter submitted to King Joseph and the French. Requisitions and taxes were levied without difficulty throughout the whole remainder of the campaign.

June 23.

General Merle continuing his success, marched northward against the province of Santander in Asturias, forced the rugged passes of Lantuerio and Venta d'Escudo, and descending the northern side of the ridge of Santander, in concert with a portion of the reserve which the emperor despatched to his assistance, made himself master of that town, and forced the intrepid bishop, with his warlike followers, to take refuge in the inaccessible fastnesses of the neighbouring mountains.¹

¹ Napier, i.
62, 64. Tor.
i. 300, 307.
Foy, iii. 269,
285.

4.

Operations in
Arragon.
First siege of
Saragossa.

While Leon and Castile were the theatres of these early and important successes, the province of Arragon, though almost entirely destitute of regular forces, was successful, after sustaining several bloody reverses, in maintaining a more prolonged resistance to the enemy. By indefatigable exertions, Palafox and the energetic junta of Saragossa had succeeded in arming and communicating the rudiments of discipline to a tumultuary assembly of ten thousand infantry and two hundred horse, with which, and eight pieces of artillery, his brother, the Marquis Lazan, ventured to march out of the city and await Lefebvre in a favourable position behind the Huecha. But though the French were not more than half the number of the enemy, they were, from the want of discipline in their opponents, and their own great superiority in cavalry, much more than a match for them.

June 12.

The peasants withstood, without flinching, several attacks in front; but a vigorous assault in flank threw them into disorder, and a gallant charge by the Polish lancers completed their rout. Notwithstanding this defeat, the

Arragonese who had escaped, having received reinforcements, again stood firm on the following day at Gallur, still nearer Saragossa, and were again overthrown. Upon this Palafox himself marched out of the capital, at the head of five thousand undisciplined burghers and peasants, and moved to reinforce the wreck of the former army at Alagon—an advantageous position, four leagues from the capital of the province, on the banks of the Jalon, near its confluence with the Ebro, where the whole took post. But the undisciplined crowd, discouraged by the preceding defeats, was now in no condition to make head against the French legions. The burghers, at the first sight of the enemy, broke and fled; and though Palafox, with a few pieces of artillery and three companies of regular troops, contrived for long to defend the entrance of the town, they too were at last compelled to yield, and retire in disorder into SARAGOSSA; and the French troops appeared before the heroic city. In the first tumult of alarm the gates were feebly defended, and a battalion of French penetrated by the Corso as far as Santa Eulgracia; but being unsupported, it was compelled to retire, and the inhabitants, elated with this trifling advantage, crowded to the walls and prepared seriously for their defence.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

June 13.

June 14.

¹ Foy, iii.
291, 292.
Tor. i. 307,
308. South.
i. 457.

Saragossa, which has now, like Numantia and Saguntum, become immortal in the rolls of fame, is situated on the right bank of the Ebro, in the midst of a fertile plain, abounding in olive groves, vineyards, gardens, and all the marks of long-continued civilisation. It contained at that period fifty thousand inhabitants, though the sword and pestilence consequent on the two memorable sieges which it underwent, have since considerably reduced its numbers. The immediate vicinity is flat, and in some places marshy; on the southern or right bank of the river it is bounded by the little course of the Huerba, the bed of which has been converted into a canal, while on the northern, the clearer stream of the Gallego, descending from the Pyrenean summits, falls at right angles into the Ebro. On the southern side, and at the distance of a quarter of a league, rises Monte Torrero, on the side of which is conducted the canal of Arragon—a noble work, commenced by the Emperor Charles V., forming a water

5.
Description
of Saragossa.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

communication without a single lock from Tudela to Saragossa. This hill commands all the plain on the left bank, and overlooks the town; several warehouses and edifices, constructed for the commerce of the canal, were intrenched and occupied by twelve hundred men. The city itself, surrounded by a low brick wall, not above ten or twelve feet in height, and three in thickness, interrupted in many places by houses and convents which were built in its line, and pierced by eight gates, with no outworks, could scarcely be said to be fortified. Very few guns were on the ramparts in a state fit for service; but the houses were strongly built, partly of stone, partly of brick, and in general two stories in height, with each flat vaulted in the roof, so as to render them nearly proof against fire; while the massy piles of the convents, rising like castles in many quarters, afforded strong positions, if the walls were forced, to a desperate and inflamed population. Few regular generals would have thought of making a stand in such a city; but Florus has recorded that Numantia had neither walls nor towers when it resisted so long and heroically the Roman legions; and Colmenar had said, nearly a century before, with a prophetic spirit, "Saragossa is without defences; but the valour of its inhabitants supplies the want of ramparts."¹

¹ Tor. ii. l. 4.
Foy, iii. 293,
294. Nap. i.
65, 66.
Cavallero,
Siege de
Saragossa,
29, 33.

6.
General con-
currence of
all classes in
the defence.

June 15.

The resolution to defend Saragossa cannot with justice be ascribed to any single individual, as the glory belongs to the whole population, all of whom, in the first movements of confusion and excitement, had a share in the generous resolution. When Palafox retired after his repeated defeats into the town, he either despaired of being able to defend it, or deemed it necessary to collect reinforcements for a prolonged resistance from other quarters, and accordingly set out with a small body of regular troops for the northern bank of the river, leaving the armed population nearly unsupported to defend the walls. This measure was well adapted to increase the ultimate means of resistance which might be brought to bear upon the invader, if the town, when left to its own resources, could make head against the enemy; but it exposed it to imminent hazard of being taken, if, in the first moments of alarm consequent on the removal of the captain-general and regular forces, the besiegers

should vigorously prosecute their operations. This accordingly happened. On the day after the repulse of his first attack, Lefebvre presented himself in greater force before the gates, and commenced an immediate assault. But the people, though without leaders, with surprising energy prepared to repulse it. In the first moment of assault, indeed, a column of the enemy penetrated to the street Santa Engracia; the citizens, though violently excited, were without leaders or concert, and a few additional battalions would have made the enemy masters of Saragossa. But at this critical moment a desultory fire from some peasants and disbanded soldiers arrested the advance of the French, and the inhabitants, regaining hope from the hesitation of the assailants, exerted themselves with such vigour, that the enemy again retired beyond the gates. Instantly the whole population were in activity: men, women, and children flew to the ramparts; cannons were dragged to the gates; loopholes struck out in the walls; fascines and gabions constructed with astonishing celerity, and in less than twenty-four hours the city was secure from a *coup-de-main*.¹

The loss sustained by Lefebvre in these unsuccessful assaults was very severe, and sufficient to convince him that operations in form would be requisite before the town could be reduced. He withdrew to a little distance, therefore, from the walls, and sent for heavy artillery from Pampeluna and Bayonne, with a view to the commencement of a regular siege. Meanwhile Palafox, who had issued into the plain on the left bank of the Ebro, moved to Pina, where he crossed the river and advanced to Belchite, and there joined the Baron Versage, who had assembled four thousand new levies. Uniting every where the volunteers whom he found in the villages, he at length gained, by a circuitous route, the river Xalon, in the rear of the French army, with seven thousand infantry, a hundred horse, and four pieces of cannon. Some of his officers, seeing so respectable a force collected together, deemed it imprudent to hazard it by attempting the relief of Saragossa, and proposed that they should retire to Valencia. Palafox assembled the troops the moment that he heard of this proposal, and, after describing in energetic colours the glorious task which

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

June 16.

¹ Cavallero, 46, 47. Tor. i. 6, 7. Napier, ii. 66, 67.

7. Operations of Palafox to relieve the city. He is defeated, and re-enters it.

June 23.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

July 2.
1 Tor. i. 11,
12. Cav. 49,
50. Nap. i.
67, 68.

8.
First opera-
tions of the
siege

awaited them of delivering their country, offered to give passports to all those who wished to leave the army. Such was the ascendancy of his intrepid spirit that not one person left the ranks.* Taking advantage of the enthusiasm excited by this unanimous determination, the Spanish general led them against the enemy, but before they could reach him night had fallen. They took up their quarters accordingly at Epila, where they were unexpectedly assailed, after dark, by Lefebvre with five thousand men. The Spanish levies, surprised and unable to form their ranks during the confusion of a nocturnal combat, were easily dispersed: although a few fought with such obstinacy that they only effected their retreat to Calatayud the following morning. Despairing, from the issue of this conflict, of being able to keep the field, Palafox became sensible that Saragossa must be defended within its own walls, and, making a long circuit, he at length re-entered the city on the 2d July.¹

- Meanwhile the besieging force, having received heavy artillery and stores from Bayonne and Pampeluna, were vigorously prosecuting their operations, which were in the first instance chiefly directed against Monte Torrero, on the left bank of the river. Destitute at this critical moment of any noble leaders, the people of Saragossa did not sink under their difficulties. Calvo de Rozas, to whom the command had been devolved in his absence by Palafox, was a man whose calm resolution was
- equal to the emergency; and he was energetically supported by a plebeian chief, Tio Martin, to whom, with Tio Jorge, of similar rank, the real glory of resolving on defence, in circumstances all but desperate, is due.

* Colonel Napier, who is seldom favourable to aristocratic leaders, says, that "Palafox, ignorant of war, and probably aided by Tio Jorge, (an urban chief of humble origin,) expressed his determination to fight," but he "did not display that firmness in danger which his speech promised, as he *must have fled early* and reached Calatayud in the night, though many of the troops arrived there *unbroken* next morning." Neither the words in italics, nor any corresponding words, are to be found in Cavallero, whom he refers to as his authority, nor in any Spanish historian with whom I am acquainted. Toreno, though an avowed liberal, after recounting Palafox's speech on this occasion, says, "Such is the power which the inflexible resolution of a chief exercises in critical circumstances." There is not the least reason to suspect the distinguished English author of intentional misrepresentation, but the insinuations here made are fatal to the character of Palafox; and as there is no ground for them, at least in the author quoted by him, it is desirable that the authorities on which they are made should be given in the next edition of that able work.—See CAVALLERO, *Siège de Saragosse*, 49; TORRENO, ii. 11; and NAPIER, i. 67.

Encouraged by the intrepid conduct of their chiefs, the people assembled in the public square, and with the magistrates, officers, and troops of the garrison, voluntarily took an oath "to shed the last drop of their blood for the defence of their religion, their king, and their hearths." They had need of all their resolution, for the means of attack against them were multiplying in a fearful progression. Verdier, whose talents had been fatally felt by the Prussians and Russians in the Polish campaign, was appointed to the command of the siege; the troops under his command were strongly reinforced, and Lefebvre was detached to act under the orders of Bessières against the insurgents in Leon. At the end of June, the besieging force being augmented to twelve thousand men, and the battering train having arrived, an attack was made on the convent of St Joseph, situated outside of the walls, which at first failed, though the besieged had no other defence than loopholes struck out in the rampart. But being resumed with greater force, the defences were carried, and the brave garrison, after obstinately contesting the possession of the church, refectory, and cells, set fire to the edifice, and retreated to the city. Monte Torrero was the next object of attack, while a tremendous fire, kept up with uncommon vigour on other parts of the town, diverted the attention of the besieged from the quarter where the real assault was to be made. The commander, despairing of success with the undisciplined crowd under his command, and not aware of the difference between fighting with such troops behind walls and in the open field, evacuated that important post; for which, though it was perhaps inevitable, he was remitted to a council of war, condemned and executed.¹

Having gained this vantage-ground, Verdier commenced a vigorous bombardment of the city, and battered its feeble walls furiously from the advantageous position which had so unexpectedly fallen into his power. Amidst the terror and confusion thus excited, repeated attacks were made on the gates of El Carmen and Portillo; but such was the ardour and tenacity of the defence, and the severity of the fire kept up from the windows, walls, and roofs of the houses, that he was on every occasion, after desperate struggles, repulsed with severe loss. These repeated

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

June 25.

June 26.

June 27.

¹ Nap. i. 67.
68. Cav. 52,
53. Tor. i.
15, 16.

9.
Progress of
the besiegers.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

July 10.

July 17.

Aug. 3.

¹ Cav. 51, 55.
 Tor. ii. 21,
 25. Poy, iii.
 298, 300.
 Nap. i. 68,
 69.

10.
 Desperate
 assault of the
 town.

failures convinced Verdier of the necessity of making approaches in form, and completing the investment of the city, which still received constant supplies of men and provisions from the surrounding country. With this view he threw a bridge of boats over the Ebro, and having thus opened a communication with the left bank, the communication of the besieged with the country, though not entirely cut off, was, after hard fighting, for many days restrained within very narrow limits. Before this could be effected, however, the patriots received a reinforcement from the regiment of Estremadura, eight hundred strong, with the aid of which they made a desperate sally with two thousand men to retake the Monte Torrero. But though the assailants fought with the utmost vehemence, they were unable to prevail against the disciplined valour of the French, and were repulsed with very heavy loss, including that of their commander. After this disaster they were necessarily confined to their walls; and the French approaches having been at length completed, the breaching batteries opened against the quarters of St Engracia and Aljafria, and a terrible bombardment having at the same time been kept up, a powder-magazine blew up with fearful devastation in the public walk of the Corso. The slender wall being soon laid in ruins, the town was summoned to surrender; but Palafox having rejected the offer, preparations were made for an assault.¹

The storm took place on the 4th August. Palafox at an early hour stationed himself on the breach, and even when the forlorn hope was approaching, refused all terms of capitulation. The combat at the ruined rampart was long and bloody; but after a violent struggle, the French penetrated into the town, and made themselves masters of the street of Santa Engracia. Deeming themselves now in possession of Saragossa, their numerous battalions poured through the deserted breach, overspread the ramparts on either side, while a close column pushed on, with fixed bayonets and loud cheers, from Santa Engracia to the street of Corso. But a desperate resistance there awaited them. Despite all the efforts of the citizens, they penetrated into the centre of the street, planted the tricolor flag on the church of the Cross near

its middle, and pierced into the convent of St Francisco on its left, and the lunatic asylum on its right, whence the insane inmates, taking advantage of the confusion, issued forth, and mingled, with frightful cries, shouts, and grimaces, among the combatants. To add to the consternation, another powder-magazine blew up in the thickest of the fight, and the burning fragments falling in all directions, set the city on fire in many different quarters. But notwithstanding all these horrors, the Spaniards maintained the conflict. An incessant fire issued from the windows and roofs of the houses; several detached bodies of the enemy which penetrated into the adjoining streets, were repulsed; a column got entangled in a long crooked street, the Arco de Cineja, and was driven back into the Corso with great slaughter; Palafox, Calvo, Tio Jorge, and Tio Martin vied with each other in heroism; and when night separated the combatants, the French were in possession of one side of the Corso and the citizens of the other.¹

CHAP.
LIV.
J808.

¹ Cav. 56, 58.
Tor. ii. 25,
29. Nap. i.
70.

The successful resistance thus made to the enemy after they had penetrated into the city, and the defences of the place, in a military point of view, had been overcome, showed the Saragossans with what prospects they might maintain the conflict even from house to house. But their gallant leader was not without apprehensions that their ammunition might fail, or the defenders be ruinously reduced during so prolonged a struggle; and, therefore, no sooner had the first triumph of the enemy been arrested, than he hastened out of the town to accelerate the arrival of the reinforcements which he knew were approaching, and exerted himself with so much vigour during the succeeding days, that on the morning of the 8th he succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the besiegers, and re-entered the city at the head of three thousand men, and a large convoy of ammunition and provisions. It may easily be imagined with what transports they were received, for, in the interim, the citizens had had a desperate conflict to maintain, from which they never enjoyed one moment's respite. From street to street, from house to house, from room to room, the fight was kept up with incredible obstinacy on both sides.² Every post became the theatre of bloody strife, to which com-

11.
Continued
contest in the
streets.

² Cav. 58,
62. Tor. ii.
28, 30. Foy,
ii. 320.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

12.
The Span-
iards gradu-
ally regain
the ascen-
dant.

pany after company, column after column, regiment after regiment, were successively brought up ; while the fire of musketry, the roar of artillery, the flight of bombs, the glare of conflagration, and the cries of the combatants, continued without intermission night and day.

But all the efforts of the besiegers were in vain : animated almost to frenzy by the long duration and heart-stirring interest of the conflict, all classes vied with each other in heroic constancy. The priests were to be seen at the posts of danger, encouraging the soldiers, and administering consolation to the wounded and the dying ; the women and children carried water incessantly to the quarters on fire, attended the wounded, interred the dead. Many even forgot the timidity of their sex, and took the places of their slain husbands or brothers at the cannon side. The citizens relieved each other night and day in the mortal and perpetual struggle with the enemy. Such was the vigour of the resistance, that, from the 4th to the 14th August, the besiegers made themselves masters only of four houses ; one in front of the Treasury was only won after an incessant combat of six days' duration. After the arrival of the reinforcements under Palafox, the conflict was no longer equal. Symptoms of discouragement were manifest in the enemy ; sinister rumours circulated on both sides, of a great disaster in the south ; and they were gradually losing ground, even in those quarters of which they had obtained possession during the first burst of the assault. Still the fire of artillery continued, and was particularly violent during the night of the 14th August ; but at daybreak on the following morning it suddenly ceased, and the besieged, when the sun rose, beheld with astonishment the enemy at some distance, in full retreat, traversing the plain towards Pampeluna. The victory was complete : the heavy cannon and siege stores were all abandoned or thrown into the canal ; and the inhabitants, with enthusiastic shouts of transport, concluded, amidst cries of " Long live Our Lady of the Pillar !" the ceremony of the *fête Dieu*, which had been interrupted by the commencement of the siege on the 16th June.¹

In truth, while this sanguinary conflict was raging in Saragossa, disasters of the most serious nature had been

¹ Cav. 59, 63.
Tor. ii. 28, 32.
Foy, ii. 321,
331. South.
ii. 25, 31.

experienced by the French in the south and east of Spain. Monecy, who had set out from Madrid early in June, with eight thousand men, to suppress the insurrection in Valencia and cut off the communication between that city and Saragossa, reached Cuença on the 11th, where he remained inactive for several days. Resuming at length his march on the 16th, he advanced by Pesquiera towards Valencia: but as he penetrated farther into the country, the universal desertion of the towns and villages, and evident traces of armed men on his line of march, gave gloomy presages of an approaching storm. In the first instance, however, these indications proved fallacious. Some Swiss companies, with a body of armed peasants and four pieces of cannon, had, indeed, taken post to defend the strong and important pass of the bridge of Pajazo, on the river Cabriel; but the new levies dispersed on the first appearance of the enemy, and the greater part of the Swiss troops joined the invaders; so that the bridge was gained without any difficulty. Encouraged by this success, Monecy wrote to General Chabran, who was ordered to co-operate with him from the side of Catalonia, appointing a rendezvous on the 28th, under the walls of Valencia; and, advancing forward, approached the rocky ridge of calcareous mountains called the Cabrillas, which forms the western boundary of the kingdom of Valencia. A single road traversed, by a rapid and laborious ascent, this rugged barrier; and as the adjoining heights were impassable for cavalry, a more advantageous position for resisting the enemy could not have been desired. The summits of the rocks which bordered the defile on either side, were covered with armed peasants to the number of six thousand; and four pieces of artillery, supported by a regiment of regular troops, and a troop of horse, guarded the main road. All these obstacles, however, were speedily overcome. While the cavalry and artillery engaged the attention of the enemy in front, General Harispe turned their flank, and by a rapid attack over almost inaccessible rocks, threw them into confusion, dispersed the new levies, and captured all the ammunition, baggage, and artillery. Nothing now remained to retard the advance of the invaders; the summit of the ridge was soon gained,¹ from

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

13.

Operations of
Monecy in
Valencia.
June 5.

June 21.

June 24.

¹ Nap. i. 92,
93. Tor. i.
326, 329.
Foy, iii.
250, 253.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

which the French soldiers, wearied with the arid mountains and waterless plains of Castile, beheld, with the delight of the Israelites of old, the green plains and irrigated meadows and level richness of the promised land, and three days afterwards they appeared before the walls of Valcenia.

14.
Description
of Valencia,
and prepara-
tions for its
defence.

Situated on the right of the Guadalaviar or Turia, and in the vicinity of the sea, Valencia is one of the most delightful cities which is to be found in Europe. It contains a hundred thousand inhabitants; but of that number more than one-half inhabit the enchanting suburban villas which lie without the walls. These walls consist of an old rampart of unhewn stones, rudely put together, including within their circuit a decayed citadel. In a military point of view, therefore, it could hardly be regarded as a place of defence; but the spirit and circumstances of the inhabitants rendered the slightest rampart a tower of strength. The enthusiasm of the people ran high; their hatred of the invaders was inextinguishable; and the crimes they had committed were too serious to give them any rational hope of safety but in the most determined resistance. It is a melancholy but certain fact, that in revolutionary movements, as in all others where passion is the prime mover, the most enduring and often successful efforts result from the consciousness of such enormities as leave no hope but in obstinate hostility — "*una spes victis, nullam sperare salutem.*" The junta had ably and energetically directed the public activity; engineers had marked out intrenchments and planted batteries to protect the principal gates of the city; a fortified camp had been constructed at a league from the walls; and the inhabitants, without distinction of age, rank, or sex, had laboured night and day, for several weeks past, to complete the works on which their common safety depended. Within the gates, preparations had been made for the most vigorous resistance; trenches had been cut, and barriers constructed across the principal streets; chariots and carts overturned, so as to impede the advance of the assailants; the windows were filled with mattresses, and the doors barricaded;¹ while a plentiful array of fire-arms, stones,

¹ Tor. 329,
330. Foy,
iii. 253, 255.
Nap. i. 93.

and boiling oil, was prepared on the flat tops of the houses to rain down death on the enemy.

The wreck of the troops and armed peasants who had combated at the Cabrillas, took refuge in the intrenched camp at Cuarte without the walls, where they occupied in force the sides of the canal which unites the waters of the Guadalaviar to those of the Fera. In that position they were attacked early on the morning of the 27th, and, after three hours' firing, driven back to the batteries and intrenchments in front of the gates. There, however, a more determined stand was made: and Moncey, desirous of bringing up his whole forces and artillery, deferred the attack on the city itself till the following day. Hardly an eye was closed in Valencia during the succeeding night. All ranks, and both sexes, laboured incessantly to complete the preparations for defence; and so great was the universal activity, that when the rays of the morning sun appeared above the blue expanse of the Mediterranean, it was hardly possible for the assailants to hope for success except from the pusillanimity of the defenders. Moncey disposed his field-pieces in the most

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

15.

Attack on
the city. Its
repulse.

June 27.

favourable situations to reply to the heavy artillery on the ramparts and outworks; and, having driven the enemy through the suburbs, commenced the assault. Such, however, was the vigour of the defence, that very little advantage was gained: the light artillery of the French was soon overpowered by the heavy cannon on the walls; a murderous fire of grape was kept up from the top of the rampart and the intrenchments round the entrance of the city; while the new levies, wholly unable to withstand the shock of their veteran opponents in the open field, contended on terms of comparative equality in the houses and behind the walls or enclosures adjoining the gates. The enthusiasm within increased as the fire approached their dwellings: the priests traversed the streets with the cross in their hands, exhorting the people to continue the contest; the women brought up ammunition to the combatants; and when the grape-shot began to fail, the ladies of rank instantly furnished an ample supply of missiles to charge the guns. A city so defended was beyond the reach of a *coup-de-main*:¹ the French troops rapidly melted away under the dropping

June 28.

¹ Tor. i. 333,
336. Nap. i.
94, 95. Foy,
iii. 254, 259.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

16.
Progress of
the insurrec-
tion and
partial suc-
cesses of the
patriots in
that quarter.

July 1.

July 3.

July 1.

July 3.

¹ Nap. i. 97,
98. Mor. ii.
336, 343.
Foy, iii. 260,
262, and iv.
49, 14.

fire with which they were assailed from many different quarters ; and in the evening Monecy drew off to Cuarte, having lost two thousand men in this fruitless attack.

The spirit of the Valencians was roused to the very highest pitch by this glorious result : and in the first burst of their triumph they confidently expected that the Conde Cervellon, who commanded a corps six thousand strong, consisting chiefly of armed peasants, on the banks of the Xucar, would fall upon the enemy in his retreat, and complete his destruction. But it is a very different thing for insurgents to repulse an assailant from behind walls, and to defeat him in the open field. While these flattering illusions were filling the city with transport, Cervellon himself narrowly escaped destruction.

Attacked by Monecy in his retreat, he was surprised with one-half of his corps on one side of the river, and the remainder on the other. The part first assailed made a feeble resistance : in the confusion of the rout, the French made themselves masters of a bridge, and, rapidly passing over, soon completed the defeat of the portion on the other side. Two days after, three thousand, who had escaped from the first disaster, were attacked and dispersed, with the loss of all their artillery, near Almanza, the celebrated theatre of the victory of the French over the Allies in the Succession War. But these advantages, though considerable, gained by a retreating army in the course of its flight, were no counterpoise to the disaster experienced before Valencia. The whole province was up in arms at the glorious tidings ; the communication both with Catalonia and Madrid was cut off ; Cuença was besieged by a body of seven thousand peasants, who overpowered the detachment left in that town ; and though the victors were themselves assailed two days after, and dispersed with great slaughter, by Caulaincourt, whom Savary despatched from Madrid with a powerful body of horse to restore the communication with Monecy in that

quarter, yet the object of the advance towards Valencia was totally lost. The French general, finding that Frère, with his division, on whose aid he had calculated in a renewed attack which he was preparing against that city,¹ had been recalled to Madrid by orders of

Savary, who was alarmed at the advance of Cuesta and Blake towards the Guadarrama pass, gave up the expedition in despair, and returned by Ocana to the capital.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

The ultimate failure of the expedition of Monecy towards Valencia was occasioned by the terror excited in the capital by the threatening advance of Cuesta and Blake, with their united forces, upon the French line of communication between Madrid and the Bayonne frontier. There, it was evident, was the vital point of the contest; there a disaster would instantly be attended with fatal consequences: secured in that quarter, the failure of less considerable expeditions emanating from the capital was of comparatively little importance. Napoleon, who was strongly impressed with these views, had used the utmost efforts to reinforce Bessières, to whom the defence of the line through Old Castile was intrusted; and after providing for the occupation of the various points in which he had so early and successfully suppressed the insurrection, he could concentrate twenty thousand men to act against the enemy, who were approaching from the Galician mountains. But meantime the enemy had not been idle. Filanghieri, captain-general of Galicia, had, with the aid of the bountiful supplies of England, succeeded in organising twenty-five thousand men—including the soldiers who had come to Corunna from Oporto, originally part of Junot's expedition, and the garrisons of that place and Ferrol—with considerable train of artillery, and taken post in the mountains ten miles in the rear of Astorga. The situation of this corps, threatening the line of communication between Bayonne and Madrid, was such as to excite the utmost disquietude in the breast of Napoleon; and he sedulously impressed upon Savary that it was there that the decisive blow was to be struck.^{1*}

17.
Advance of
Cuesta in
Leon on the
French com-
munications.

¹ Sav. iii.
248, 250.
Tor. ii. 341.
Nap. i. 101.

That general, however, was not so well aware as his

* "A stroke delivered by Bessières," said he, "would paralyse all Spain. What signifies now Valencia and Andalusia? The only way really to strengthen Dupont is to reinforce Bessières. There is not a citizen of Madrid, not a peasant in the remotest valleys of Spain, who does not feel that the fate of the campaign is exclusively in the hands of Marshal Bessières. What a misfortune, then, that in so important an affair we should lose a chance, how inconsiderable soever, of success."—NAPOLEON to SAVARY, July 13, 1808; Foy, iv. 45, 46; and NAPIER, i. *Appendix*, No. 1.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

18.
Operations of
Bessières
against
Blake and
Cuesta in
Leon.
June 28.

imperial master where the vital point was to be found ; and, instead of reinforcing Bessières with all his disposable forces, he despatched Frère with his division on the track of Moncey, to endeavour to re-open the communication with that marshal, which the intervening insurrection had entirely cut off ; and sent on Vedel and Gobert, with their respective divisions, to reinforce Dupont, who had by this time crossed the Sierra Morena, and was far advanced in his progress through Andalusia. Impressed, in a short time afterwards, with the increasing danger to his communications which arose from the junction of the Galician army near Astorga with that which still kept its ground in Leon under Cuesta, he hastily countermanded these orders ; recalled Frère to Madrid ; ordered Vedel, Gobert, and even Dupont himself, to remeasure their steps, and held himself in readiness to march from the capital with all the disposable troops he could collect, to reinforce Bessières on the line of the great northern communication. These dispositions, as usual with alterations made in general designs on the spur of the moment, and in presence of the enemy, were essentially erroneous. The decisive point should have been looked to at first ; the subsequent vacillation was too late to strengthen Bessières, but was calculated essentially to weaken Dupont, whom it went to deprive, in circumstances of imminent danger, of one of his best divisions. As such, they excited the greatest displeasure in Napoleon, who gave vent to it in an able and acrimonious despatch (which throws great light on the state of the campaign at this period,) and never afterwards in military transactions intrusted Savary with any important command.^{1*} But

¹ Sav. iii.
248, 252.
Tor. ii. 344,
345. Foy, iv.
40, 47. Nap.
i. 101, 102

* "The French affairs in Spain," said Napoleon, "would be in an excellent state if Gobert's division had marched upon Valladolid to support Bessières, and Frère's division had occupied San Clemente, alike ready to reinforce Moncey or Dupont, as circumstances might require. Instead of this, Gobert having been directed upon Dupont, and Frère being with Moncey, harassed and weakened by marches and counter-marches, our situation has been sensibly injured. It is a great mistake not to have occupied the citadel of Segovia ; of all positions in that quarter it is the most dangerous to the French army, as, situated between two roads, it intercepts both communications. *If Dupont should experience a check, it is of no consequence ;* the only effect of it would be to leave him to repass the mountains ; but a stroke delivered to Marshal Bessières would tell on the heart of the army, would give it a locked jaw, and speedily be felt in all its extremities. It is on this account that it is so unfortunate that the prescribed orders have not been specifically obeyed. The army of Bessières should have had at least eight thousand men more than it has, in order to remove all chance of a disaster in that quarter. The affair of Valencia was a matter of no importance ; Moncey alone was adequate to it ; it was absurd to think of rein-

meanwhile the danger had blown over in the north. Bessières, though unsupported, had not only made head against Cuesta and Blake, but defeated them; and a great victory in the plains of Leon had opened to Joseph the gates of Madrid.

Blake, with the army of Galicia, having effected a junction with the remains of Cuesta's troops which had escaped the rout of Palencia, their united forces left a division at Benevento to protect their stores, and advanced into the plains of Leon to give battle to Bessières. This plan could not but appear rash, considering the veteran character of the French troops, their superiority in cavalry, and the undisciplined crowd of which a large part of the Spanish levies was composed. It was undertaken solely on the responsibility of Cuesta, who had assumed the chief command, and against the strongest remonstrances of Blake, who urged that, by falling back to the frontiers of Galicia, where the French general could never pretend to follow them, they would gain time to discipline and equip their troops, and would soon be enabled to advance again at the head of forty thousand effective men. This sage counsel was rejected. Cuesta, who was a brave but inexperienced veteran, equally headstrong and obstinate, insisted upon an immediate action; and finding that Blake still declined to obey, he addressed himself to the junta of Galicia, who, yielding to popular clamour, seconded his orders, and directed Blake forthwith to advance and give battle. Having now no alternative but submission, Blake did the utmost in his power, during the short interval which remained, to put his troops into good condition;

CHAP.

LIV.

1808.

19.

Movements
preparatory
to a battle on
both sides.

forcing him. If he could not take that town with the forces he had, he could not have done so with twenty thousand more; in that case it would become an affair of artillery. You cannot take by a single stroke a town with eighty thousand or a hundred thousand inhabitants, who have barricaded the streets and fortified the houses. Frère, therefore, could have added nothing to the means of Monecy against Valencia, while the abstraction of his division seriously weakened Dupont. Moreover, if the latter general was to be succoured, it would have been better to have sent him a single regiment direct, than three by so circuitous a route as that by which Frère was ordered to march. In civil wars it is the important points which must be defended, and no attempt made to go every where. The grand object of all the armies should be to preserve Madrid; it is there that every thing is to be lost or won. Madrid cannot be seriously menaced except by the army of Galicia; but it may be so there; for Bessières has not adequate forces to ensure its defeat. It may be threatened by the army of Andalusia, but hardly endangered; for in proportion as Dupont falls back, he is reinforced, and with their twenty thousand men he and Vedel should at least be able to keep the enemy in check in that quarter."—*Notes addressed to SAVARY on the affairs of Spain by NAPOLEON, 13th July 1808; taken at the battle of Vitoria in King JOSEPH'S Portfolio; NAPIER, i. Appendix, No. 1.*

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

July 13.

¹ Nap. i. 106.
Tor. ii. 347,
348. Foy, iii.
302, 308.

20.
Battle of
Rio Seco.
July 14.

and on the 13th July, Cuesta moved forward with the united forces, amounting to twenty-five thousand infantry, four hundred cavalry, and thirty pieces of cannon, to RIO SECO. Bessières' force was much less numerous, amounting only to fifteen thousand men, and twenty-five guns; but of these nearly two thousand were admirable horsemen, and the composition of the whole was such as more than to counterbalance the inferiority in point of numbers.¹

The dispositions of Cuesta for the battle were as faulty as the resolution to hazard it was ill advised. Contrary alike to the rules of the military art, and the dictates of common sense on the subject, he drew up his troops in two lines at the distance of a mile and a half from each other. The first, ten thousand strong, under Blake, with fifteen pieces of cannon, but in great part composed of raw levies, was stationed on a plateau in advance, of rugged and difficult access; the second, fifteen hundred toises (nine thousand feet) in the rear, led by Cuesta in person, consisted of fifteen thousand men, almost all regular soldiers, and fifteen guns. The few cavalry they had were with the first line. Bessières, perceiving at once the advantage which this extraordinary disposition offered to an enterprising attack, prepared to avail himself to the utmost of it by throwing the bulk of his forces into the wide chasm between the two lines, so as to overwhelm the first before the second could come up to its assistance. Penetrating rapidly into the open space between the two parts of the army, he attacked Blake both in flank and rear with such vigour, that in an instant his lines were broken, his artillery taken, his men dispersed. As soon as he saw the rout of his first line, Cuesta moved forward with the second to the attack, and succeeded in reaching the enemy before the disorder consequent on their rapid success and pursuit had been repaired. The consequences had well-nigh proved fatal to the victors. Cuesta's right wing, advancing swiftly and steadily forward in good order, overthrew several French battalions which had not fully recovered their ranks, and captured four guns.²

This disaster, like that experienced by Zach's grenadiers at Marengo, might, with a less skilful commander or less steady troops, have turned the fortune of the day; for the

² Foy, iii.
310, 313.
Tor. ii. 352.
Nap. i. 107.

example of disorder is contagious, and the confusion was already spreading into the French centre, when Bessières, with the cavalry of the Imperial Guard, twelve hundred strong, charged Cuesta's right, which had become exposed by the rapidity of its advance, in flank, with great vigour; and Merle's division, returning from the pursuit of Blake, renewed the combat in front. A short but sanguinary struggle ensued. The Spanish infantry fought bravely, and for a few minutes the fate of the battle hung by a thread; but at length they were broken, and the loud shouts of victory, which had been raised in the Castilian ranks, passed to the French side. After this it was no longer a battle, but a massacre and rout; the Spaniards broke and dispersed on all sides, leaving eighteen guns, and their whole ammunition, besides two thousand prisoners, in the hands of the enemy. Three thousand had fallen on the field, while the loss of the victors did not exceed twelve hundred men. The town of Rio Seco, taken in the pursuit, was sacked and plundered with merciless severity, and all the nuns in the convents were subjected to the brutal violence of the soldiery. Few days have been more disastrous to Spain, for, worse than the loss of artillery and prisoners, it destroyed all confidence in the ability of their troops to withstand the enemy in the field; while to Napoleon it was the source of unbounded, and, as it turned out, undeserved exultation. "It is Villa Viciosa," he exclaimed, when the joyful intelligence arrived at Bayonne; "Bessières has placed Joseph on the throne of Spain."* Deeming the war over, he left that fortress, and pursued his journey by Bordeaux for the French capital: while Joseph, relieved now of all anxiety in regard to his communications, pursued his journey to Madrid, where he arrived, as already mentioned, on the 21st July.¹

Napoleon was premature in this judgment: Rio Seco placed Joseph on the throne of Madrid; but it neither

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

21.

Defeat of the
Spaniards.

¹ South. i.
480, 481.
Foy, iii. 310,
313. Tor. ii.
352, 354.
Nap. i. 107.

* In allusion to the battle at Villa Viciosa, where Philip V. and the Duke de Vendôme gained a complete victory over the Allies, which decided the Suc-

military force of both sides was collected in one field; whereas at Rio Seco the general of an intrusive king sought to beat down the native troops of Castile, and a fragment only of the military strength of either side was engaged.—See Foy, iv. 47.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

22.

Further pre-
parations of
Napoleon for
the war.

finished the war, nor maintained him there. He did not, however, on that account suspend his military preparations: nine thousand Poles, who had entered the service of France, were directed, with four regiments of infantry and two of cavalry from the Grand Army in Germany, towards the Pyrenees. All the princes of the Rhenish Confederacy received orders to send a regiment each in the same direction: the guards of Joseph followed him to Spain from Naples. Tuscany and the kingdom of Italy were commanded to send their contingents to reinforce Duhesme in Catalonia. Reinforcements to the amount of forty thousand men were thus provided, which all arrived in Spain during the three following months, but too late to arrest the progress of misfortune. While both the French Emperor and his royal brother were indulging in the sanguine hope that all was terminated, a dreadful disaster had occurred in Andalusia, and a blow been struck on the banks of the Guadalquivir which resounded from one end of Europe to the other.¹

¹ Foy, iv.
48, 49.

23.

March of
Dupont into
Andalusia.

Dupont, who was at Toledo when the insurrection broke out in all parts of Spain, received, on the 24th May, an order from Murat, then lieutenant-general of Spain, to move upon Cadiz, by the route of the Sierra Morena, Cordova, and Seville. He was to be joined in Andalusia by four thousand men and ten guns drawn from the army of Portugal. Having immediately set out, he experienced no resistance while traversing the open plains of La Mancha; and in the Sierra Morena found the villages indeed deserted, but no enemy to dispute his progress. At Andujar, however, where he arrived on the 2d June, he received information of the real state of matters in that province,—that Seville, Cadiz, and all the principal towns were ruled by juntas, which had declared war against France; that the army at St Roque had joined the patriot cause, and that the peasants by tens of thousands were flocking into the burghs to enrol themselves under the national banners. Alarmed by this intelligence, Dupont wrote to Madrid for reinforcements, and, after establishing an hospital at Andujar and taking measures of precaution to secure his rear, set out four days afterwards, and continued his march towards Cordova, still following the left bank of the Guadalquivir.² This road, however, after run-

June 2.

June 7.
² Tor. i. 320.
Foy, iii. 224,
227. Nap. i.
112.

ning eight-and-twenty leagues on that bank of the river, crosses it at Vinta de Alcolea by a long bridge of nineteen arches, strongly constructed of black marble. It was at its extremity that the Spaniards awaited the enemy.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

The end of the bridge on the left bank was fortified by a *tête-du-pont*; twelve guns were mounted on the right bank to enfilade the approach to it, and three thousand regular troops, supported by ten thousand armed peasants, waited in Alcolea to dispute the passage; while the heights on the left bank, in the rear of the French, were occupied by a cloud of insurgents ready to fall on them behind as soon as they were actively engaged with the more regular force in the front. The French general, seeing such preparations ready for his reception, delayed the attack till the following morning, and meanwhile made his dispositions against the numerous enemies by whom he was surrounded. This was no difficult matter: a very small part only of the Spanish force was adequate to the encounter of regular soldiers. At daybreak on the following morning, General Fresia, with a battalion of infantry and a large body of cavalry, attacked the peasants on the left bank, and by a few charges dispersed them: at the same time a column with ease broke into the *tête-du-pont*, the works of which were not yet finished, and rapidly charging across the bridge, of which the arches had not been cut, routed the Spanish troops at Alcolea on the opposite side with such loss that all their artillery was taken. Echevarria, the commander, despairing of defending Cordova, fled with such precipitance, that before night he reached Eeija, twelve leagues from the field of battle.¹

24.
Capture of
the bridge of
Vinta de
Alcolea.

June 8.

¹ Foy, iii.
224, 230.
Nap. i. 112,
113. Tor. i.
320, 321.

Abandoned to their own resources, and destitute of any leaders for their guidance, the magistrates having all fled on the first alarm, the inhabitants of Cordova, before which the French presented themselves the same day, were in no condition to resist the invaders. The gates nevertheless were shut, and the old towers which flanked their approaches filled with armed men, by whom, as the cannon of the enemy approached, a feeble fire was kept up. A parleying for surrender, however, took place, and the conferences were going on, when, under pretence of a few random shots from some windows, the guns were dis-

25.
Taking and
sack of
Cordova.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

charged at the gates, which were instantly burst open ; the troops rushed into the town, where hardly any resistance was made, but which notwithstanding underwent all the horrors of a place carried by assault. A scene of indescribable horror ensued, fraught with acute but passing suffering to the Spaniards, with lasting disgrace to the French. A universal pillage took place. Every public establishment was sacked, every private house plundered. Armed and unarmed men were slaughtered indiscriminately ; women ravished ; the churches plundered ; even the venerable cathedral, originally the much-loved mosque of the Omniade Caliphs, which had survived the devastations of the first Christian conquest, six hundred years before, was stripped of its riches and ornaments, and defiled by the vilest debauchery. Nor was this merely the unbridled license of subaltern insubordination, too common on such occasions with the best disciplined forces. The general-in-chief and superior officers themselves set the first example of a rapacity as pernicious as it was disgraceful ; and from the plunder of the Treasury and Office of Consolidation, Dupont contrived to realise above 10,000,000 reals, or £100,000 sterling. Not content with this hideous devastation, the French general, when the sack had ceased, overwhelmed the city by an enormous contribution. It is some consolation, amidst so frightful a display of military license and unbridled cupidity, that a righteous retribution speedily overtook its perpetrators ; that it was the load of their public and private plunder which shortly after retarded their retreat along the banks of the Guadalquivir ; and that it was anxiety to preserve their ill-gotten spoil which paralysed their arms in the field, and brought an unheard-of disgrace on the French standards.^{1*}

¹ Foy, iii.
229, 231.
Tor. i. 321.
323. Nap. i.
113. South.
i. 475, 476.
Lond. i. 87.

* Colonel Napier says, (i. 114, 1st edit.) "As the inhabitants took no part in the contest, and received the French without any signs of aversion, the town was protected from pillage, and Dupont fixed his headquarters there." It would be well if he would specify the authority on which this assertion is made, as it is directly contrary to the united testimony of even the most liberal French and Spanish historians. Foy says, with his usual admirable candour, "To some musket-shots, discharged almost by accident from the windows, the French answered by a continued discharge, and speedily burst open the gates. Men without arms, without the means of resistance, were slaughtered in the streets ; the houses, the churches, even the celebrated mosque, which the Christians had converted into a cathedral, were alike sacked. The ancient capital of the Omniade Caliphs, the greatest kings which Spain ever beheld, saw scenes of horror renewed such as it had not witnessed since the city was

Dupont remained several days at Cordova, but learning that the insurrection had spread, and was gathering strength in all directions, and finding his communications with Madrid intercepted by the patriot bands in his rear, he deemed it imprudent to make any farther advance in the direction of Seville. Meanwhile the insurgents closed around and hemmed him in on every side. The armed peasants of Jaen and its vicinity crossed the Guadalquivir, and overwhelmed the detachment left at Andujar in charge of the sick there, and with savage cruelty, in revenge for the sack of Cordova, put them all to death; the smugglers of the Sierra Morena, relinquishing their illicit traffic for a more heart-stirring conflict, issued from their gloomy retreats, and beset all the passes of their inaccessible mountains. Even the peasants of La Mancha had caught the flame; the magazines of Mudela had fallen into their power; the sick at Manzanares had been barbarously put to the sword; the roads were so beset that even considerable detachments in the rear were captured or defeated; General Roize, with a body of four hundred convalescents, was overthrown in the open plains of La Mancha; and after having joined five hundred light horse under General Belair, the united array was deemed inadequate to forcing the passes of the Sierra Morena, and fell back towards Toledo. These accumulating disasters, which were greatly magnified by popular rumour, and the impossibility of getting any correct detail of the facts from the general interruption of the communications, produced such an impression on Dupont, that he deemed it hopeless to attempt any farther advance into Andalusia; a resolution which proved the salvation of that province, and, in the end, of Spain;¹ for such was the state of anarchy and irresolution

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

26.

Accumulation of forces under Castanos round the invaders.

¹ Foy, iii. 234, 236.
Tor. ii. 325.
Nap. i. 114.

taken in 1236 by Ferdinand King of Castile. These terrible scenes had no excuse in the losses sustained by the conqueror; for the attack of the town had not cost them ten men, and the total success of the day had only weakened them by thirty killed and eighty wounded." Toreno, though a decided liberal Spanish historian, observes,—“Rushing into the town, the French proceeded, killing or wounding all those whom they met on their road: they sacked the houses, the temples, even the humblest dwellings of the poor. The ancient and celebrated cathedral became the prey of the insatiable and destructive rapacity of the stranger. The massacre was great, the quantity of precious spoil collected immense. From the single depots of the Treasury and the Consolidation, Dupont obtained ten million reals, besides the sums extracted from public and private places of deposit. It was thus that a population was delivered up to plunder which had neither made nor attempted the slightest resistance.”—See Foy, iii. 230, 231; and TORENO, i. 322.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

which prevailed among the troops intrusted with its defence, that, had he advanced boldly forward and followed up his successes at Alcolea and Cordova with the requisite vigour, Seville would at once have fallen into his power, and the insurrection in that quarter been entirely crushed.

27.
Dismay of
the Spaniards
and irresolu-
tion of
Dupont.

Castanos, indeed, was at the head of eight thousand regular troops, drawn from the camp at St Roque, and an enthusiastic but undisciplined body of thirty thousand armed peasants assembled at Utrera. But the latter part of his force was incapable of any efficient operations in the field; and such was the consternation occasioned, in the first instance, by the success of the French irruption, that the general-in-chief was desirous of retiring to Cadiz, and making its impregnable fortifications the citadel of an intrenched camp, where the new levies might acquire some degree of consistency, and the support of ten or twelve thousand British troops might, in case of necessity, be obtained. The authority of Castanos was merely nominal; Morla, governor of Cadiz, was his enemy; and the junta of Seville issued orders independent of either: so that the former general, despairing of success, had actually, under pretence of providing for the security of Cadiz, embarked his heavy artillery for that fortress. From this disgrace, however, the Spaniards were relieved by the apprehensions of the enemy. A pause in an invading army is dangerous at all times, but especially so when an insurrection is to be put down by the moral influence of its advance; and the hesitation of Dupont at Cordova proved his ruin. He remained ten days inactive there, during which the whole effect of his victory was lost. Confidence returned to the enemy from the hourly increase of their force, and the evident alarm of the French general: and at length some intercepted despatches to Savary were found to contain so doleful an account of his situation, that not only were all thoughts of retiring farther laid aside, but it was resolved immediately to advance, and surround the enemy in the city which he had conquered.¹

¹ Nap. i. 114.
115. Foy,
iii. 234, 236.
Tor. ii. 326.
Nap. i. App.
No. 13.

The fears of Dupont, however, prevented Cordova from a second time becoming the theatre of military license. Detachments of peasants had occupied all the passes in

the Sierra Morena : troops, including some regulars, were accumulating in the direction of Grenada, with the design of seizing Carolina and intercepting his retreat to La Mancha. Fame had magnified the amount of the forces descending into the plains of Leon, under Cuesta and Blake ; and rumours had got abroad that Savary was fortifying himself in the Retiro. Unable to withstand the sinister presentiments consequent on such an accumulation of adverse incidents, the French general resolved to fall back ; and accordingly broke up from Cordova on the 16th June, and three days afterwards reached Andujar, without having experienced any molestation. A strong detachment was immediately sent off to Jaen, which defeated the insurgents, and took a severe but not undeserved vengeance on the inhabitants for their barbarity to the sick at Andujar, by sacking and burning the town.* The supplies, however, which Dupont expected from this excursion were not obtained ; for every article of provisions which the town contained was consumed in the conflagration. Both sides after this continued inactive for above three weeks, during which the sick in the French hospital, as usual with a retreating army, rapidly augmented ; while the Spanish forces, under Castanos, which now approached, increased so much, by reinforcements from all quarters, that that general could now muster above twenty thousand regular infantry and two thousand horse, besides a motley crowd of thirty thousand armed peasants under his command. During the same period, however, powerful reinforcements reached the French general ; for Gobert, with his division, whose absence from Leon Napoleon had so bitterly lamented, joined Vedel at BAYLEN on the 15th July, and a brigade was pushed on under Leger Belair to open up the communication with the main body at Andujar. But the Spanish generals, now deeming the escape of the French impossible, were taking measures for enveloping the whole, and forcing them to surrender.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

28.

Retreat of
Dupont to
Andujar and
Baylen.

June 16.

June 19.

¹ Nap. i. 117,
120. Foy,
iv. 49, 52.
Tor. i. 326,
360.

* That severity, however deplorable, was perhaps rendered necessary, and therefore justified, by the massacre of the sick at Andujar ; but in the prosecution of their orders the French soldiers proceeded to excesses as wanton as they were savage ; massacring old men, and infants at the breast, and exercising the last acts of cruelty on some sick friars of St Domingo and St Augustine who could not escape from the town.—TORRES, i. 326.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

29.

Spanish plan¹
of attack, and
preparatory
movements
on both sides.¹ Ante, c.
25, § 59.

July 11.

July 14.

July 16.

In truth the long delay afforded by the inactivity of Dupont had been turned to the best account by the Spanish general. In the interim he contrived to give a certain degree of consistence to his numerous but tumultuous array of peasants: while the disembarkation of General Spencer with five thousand English troops, chiefly from Gibraltar, at Port St Mary's, near Cadiz, inspired general confidence by securing a rallying point in case of disaster. At length the regular troops from Grenada, St Roque, Cadiz, and other quarters having all assembled, to the number of eight-and-twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse, a combined plan of attack was agreed on. The army was arranged in three divisions; the first, under Reding, a Swiss general of distinction, brother to the intrepid patriot of the same name,¹ received orders to cross the Guadalquivir at Mengibar, and move to Baylen, in the rear of Andujar, where Dupont still was, and between that town and the Sierra Morena; the second, under Coupigny, was to pass the same river at Villa-Neuva and support Reding; while Castanos, with the third and the reserve, was to press the enemy in front, and a body of irregular troops, under Don Juan de la Cruz, passing by the bridge of Marmolejo, to harass his right flank. A glance at any good map of the country will at once show that the effect of these dispositions, which were ably combined, was to throw a preponderating force in the rear of Dupont directly on his line of communications, and either separate the division under his immediate command from those of Gobert and Vedel, or interpose between them both and the road to Madrid. They were promptly and vigorously carried into execution. Castanos, with the troops under his immediate command, approached to within a league of Andujar, and so alarmed Dupont that he sent to Vedel for assistance, who came with his whole division, except thirteen hundred men left to guard the ford of Mengibar. This small body was there attacked, two days after, by Reding with eight thousand men, defeated, and the passage of the river forced; Gobert, advancing from Baylen to support the broken detachment, received a ball in the forehead, and fell dead on the spot. The French in dismay retreated to Baylen, and the Spaniards,

under Reding, seeing themselves interposed in this manner between Gobert and Vedel, with forces little superior to either, taken singly, also retired in the night by the ford to the other bank of the river. But this bold irruption into the middle of their line of march, and the disaster of Gobert, spread consternation through the army. A loud cannonade, heard the whole day from the side of Andujar, where Castanos was engaging the attention of Dupont, induced the belief that they were beset on all sides; and the accounts which reached both armies in the evening of the disaster experienced before Valencia, increased the confidence of the Spaniards as much as it depressed the feelings of the French soldiers.¹*

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Tor. i. 360,
363. Foy,
iv. 59, 66.
Jom. iii. 60,
61. Nap. i.
120, 121.

In the whole French army there was not a general of division who bore a higher character than Dupont; and when he set out for Andalusia, in command of so considerable a force, it was universally believed that he would win his marshal's baton at Cadiz. In 1801, he had distinguished himself, under Brune, in the winter campaign with the Austrians on the Italian plains: in 1805, his gallant conduct had eminently contributed to the glorious triumph at Ulm: in 1807, he had been not less conspicuous in the Polish war at Eylau and Friedland. His courage was unquestionable: his talents of no ordinary kind. But it is one thing to possess the spirit and intrepidity which makes a good general of division or colonel of grenadiers; it is another and a very different thing to be endowed with the moral resolution which is requisite to withstand disaster, and act with the decision and energy indispensable in a general-in-chief. In the situation in which he was now placed there was but one course to adopt, and that was, to mass all his forces together, and bear down in a single column upon the enemy, so as to reopen his communications, and secure, at all hazards, his retreat: and twenty thousand French soldiers assembled together were adequate to bursting through at a single point all the troops of Spain.²

30.
Character of
Dupont.

² Foy, iv. 67,
72. Tor. i.
363. Jom.
iii. 60.

* A singular coincidence occurred in relation to the place and day of the action in which General Gobert lost his life. On the same day (16th July) nearly six hundred years before, (16th July 1212,) there had been gained at the same place the great battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, by Alphonso IX. over the Mussulman host of Spain and Africa, two hundred thousand strong. Gobert fell on the field still called the *field of massacre*, from the carnage made of the Moors on that memorable occasion—the greatest victory after that of Tours ever gained by the Christians over the soldiers of the Crescent.—TORENO, i. 363.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

31.
Singular
manner in
which the
armies be-
came inter-
laced.
July 17.

Instead of this, he divided his force, and thereby exposed it to destruction. Vedel received orders to lead back to Baylen his own division and that of Gobert, while the general-in-chief himself continued fronting Castanos at Andujar. But meanwhile Generals Dufour and Leger Belair, who had been left at Baylen, were so much disquieted by the forces under Reding and Coupigny, which had now united together, and threatened them with an attack, that they retired towards Carolina, on the road to the Sierra Morena; and Vedel, finding, on his arrival at Baylen, that it was entirely evacuated by the French troops, followed them to the same place, with the design of securing the passes of the mountains in their rear. By this fatal movement the two divisions of the French army were irrevocably separated; and Reding and Coupigny, finding no enemy to oppose them, entered in great force into Baylen, and established themselves there. Thus the two hostile armies became interlaced in the most extraordinary manner: Castanos having Dupont between him and Reding, and Reding being interposed between the French general and his lieutenant Vedel.¹

¹ Foy, iv. 67,
77. Tor. i.
363, 364.
Nap. i. 122.
Jom. iii. 60,
61.

32.
Movements
which led to
the battle of
Baylen.
July 19.

In such a situation a decisive advantage to one or other party is at hand; and it generally falls to the commander who boldly takes the initiative, and brings his combined forces to bear on the isolated corps of his opponent. Dupont, sensible of his danger, broke up from Andujar late on the evening of the 18th, and marched towards Baylen, on his direct line of retreat; while Reding and Coupigny, finding themselves relieved of all fears from Vedel and Dufour, who had moved to Carolina, in the entrance of the mountains, turned their faces to the southward, and early on the following morning marched towards Andujar, with the design of co-operating with Castanos in the attack upon Dupont. Hearing, soon after their departure, of his approach towards them, they took post in a strong position, intersected with ravines and covered by olive woods, in front of Baylen; and soon the French outposts appeared in sight. Their forces, widely scattered and coming up in disorder, resembled rather a detachment guarding an immense convoy than a corps equipped for field operations;² so heavily were they encumbered with five hundred baggage-waggons, which

² Jom. iii.
61, 62. Nap.
i. 122. Tor. i.
364. Foy, iv.
77.

conveyed along the artillery and ammunition stores, and the ill-gotten plunder of Cordova.

Great was the dismay of the French troops when, in the obscurity of the morning, an hour before sunrise, they suddenly came upon the Spanish array right in their front, occupying this advantageous position. There was no time, however, for deliberation ; for Castanos, having heard of their departure from Andujar, had shortly after entered that town, and, passing through it with the bulk of his forces, was already threatening their rear. Dupont immediately made his dispositions for forcing his way, sword in hand, through the barrier of steel which opposed his progress ; and had his troops been concentrated, there can be little doubt that he would have succeeded in doing so, and either thrown Reding back towards Vedel, or opened up his own communication with that general. But at this decisive moment the sack of Cordova proved their ruin. The troops were scattered along a line of march of three leagues in length, encumbered with innumerable waggons ; the best were in rear to guard the precious convoy from the assaults of Castanos. Hastily assembling such troops as he could collect in front, Dupont, with three thousand men, commenced an attack when the day broke, at four in the morning ; but his troops, fatigued by a long night-march, and discouraged by the unexpected and dangerous enemy which obstructed their advance, could make no impression on the Swiss regiments and Walloon guards, the flower of the Spanish army, which there awaited their approach. After a gallant struggle, in which they sustained severe loss, they were driven back, and lost not only some guns which in the commencement of the action they had taken from the enemy, but even their own.¹

As brigade after brigade successively came up to the front, they were brought forward to the attack, but with no better success. The French troops, wearied by a night-march, choked with dust, disordered by the encumbrance of baggage-waggons, overwhelmed by the burning sun of Andalusia in the dog-days, were no match for the steady Swiss and Walloon guards, who had rested all night coolly under the shade, in a strong position, or even for the new levies, to whom Reding had imparted his own invincible

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

33.

Battle of
Baylen.
July 19.

¹ Jom. iii.
61, 62. Tor.
i. 364, 366.
Foy, iv. 77,
80. Nap. i.
122, 123.

34.

Defeat of the
French.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

spirit. Their guns, which came up one by one in haste and confusion, and never equalled those which the enemy had in battery, were speedily dismounted by the superior force and aim of the Spanish artillery. Two thousand men had already fallen on the side of the invaders, while scarce a tenth of the number were disabled on that of their enemies. Heat and thirst overwhelmed even the bravest soldiers; and that fatal dejection which is the forerunner of disaster, was rapidly spreading among the young conscripts, when two Swiss regiments, which had hitherto bravely maintained the combat on the right, came to a parley with their brethren in the Spanish lines, and passed over to the side of Reding. At the same time a loud cannonade was heard in the rear; and disordered fugitives, breathless from running, and almost melting with heat, burst through the ranks, and announced that a large body of the Spaniards under La Pena, the advanced guard of Castanos, was already menacing the rear. Despairing now of extricating himself from his difficulties, ignorant of the situation of Vedel or Dufour, and deeming a capitulation the only way of preserving the army from destruction, Dupont sent to Reding to propose a suspension of arms, which was at once agreed to.¹

¹ Foy, iv. 77,
84. Tor. i.
364, 367.
Nap. i. 122.
123. Jom. iii.
61, 62. Lond.
i. 94, 95.

^{35.}
Tardy arrival
of Vedel, who
shares in the
disgrace.

While Dupont, with the corps under his immediate command, not ten thousand strong, was thus maintaining a painful and hopeless struggle with the concentrated masses of the Spaniards, more than double the amount of his troops, the remainder of his army, of equal force, under Vedel and Dufour, was occupied to no purpose at a distance from the scene of action. The whole of the 18th was spent by these generals at Carolina in allowing the soldiers to repose, and repairing the losses of the artillery. But as the enemy, whom they expected to find at the entrance of the passes, had disappeared, and a loud cannonade was heard the following morning on the side of Baylen, they rightly judged that it was there that the decisive point was to be found, and set out in that direction. The distance from Carolina to Baylen was only eight miles; that from Andujar to the same place was sixteen: by a little activity, therefore, Vedel might have reached the rear of Reding sooner than Castanos could that of Dupont, and then the fate which

the Spanish generals designed for the French troops must have overtaken themselves. When he arrived at Guaroman, however, nearly half way, the troops were so much exhausted by the heat that Vedel, though he heard the cannonade, now only five miles distant, hourly increasing, had the weakness to allow them some hours of repose. This halt proved decisive : while it continued, Dupont's troops, whom he might with ease have reached in two hours, were reduced to desperation. At noon the firing suddenly ceased, and the soldiers flattered themselves that the danger had passed : it was the suspension of arms, which was about to bring unheard-of disgrace upon them all. When they resumed their march, at two in the afternoon, they soon came upon the rear of Reding, and, discrediting the statement of an armistice, which was immediately made known to them, commenced an attack, made prisoners a battalion of Irish in the service of Spain, captured some guns, and dispersed the new levies which defended them. They were within a league of their comrades in distress, when an officer from Dupont arrived with the mournful intelligence that a suspension of arms had been agreed to, and that they had no alternative but submission. It was all over ; the halt of a few hours at Guaroman had ruined the expedition : twenty thousand men were about to lay down their arms ; Europe was to be electrified, the empire of Napoleon shaken to its foundation. Such is the importance of time in war.¹

Dupont in the outset proposed a capitulation, in virtue of which the whole French troops were to be allowed to retire, with their artillery and baggage, out of Andalusia ; and Castanos was at first inclined to have acceded to the proposal, deeming it an immense advantage to clear that province of the enemy, and gain time in this way for completing his preparations. But at this critical moment the despatches were intercepted and brought to headquarters, which announced the approach of Cuesta to the capital, and recalled Dupont to aid in its defence. A convention would no longer be listened to : an absolute surrender of arms was required, under condition only of the troops being sent to France by sea. After many fruitless efforts to avoid so hard a fate, this was agreed to by Dupont ; but he insinuated to Vedel that

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ Tor. i. 367.
368. Foy, iv.
85, 91. Nap.
i. 122, 124.
Jom. ii. 62,
63.

36.
Capitulation
of Dupont.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

he might endeavour to extricate himself from the toils. That general accordingly retired to Carolina; but the Spaniards threatened to put Dupont and his whole division to the sword if this movement was not stopped, and Vedel included in the capitulation. Intimidated by these menaces, orders to this effect were despatched by Dupont: and so completely was the spirit of the French officers broken, that, out of twenty-four whom Vedel assembled to deliberate on the course they should pursue at this crisis, only *four*, including that general himself, voted for disregarding the capitulation, and continuing their retreat, which was now open, to La Mancha. Nay, to such an extent did the panic extend, that a Spanish detachment crossed the mountains, and made prisoners, upon the strength of the capitulation of Baylen, all the French depots and insulated bodies as far as Toledo, which, with those who laid down their arms on the field, swelled the captives to twenty-one thousand. Two thousand had fallen in the battle—a thousand in the previous operations, or from the effect of sickness: twenty-four thousand men were lost to France!¹

¹ Nap. i. 12, 124. Foy, iv. 97, 106. Tor. i. 370, 372. Jom. ii. 64, 64.

37.
Immense sensation which it produces in Spain and over Europe.

Language can convey to future ages no adequate idea of the impression which this extraordinary event produced in Europe. Nothing since the opening of the revolutionary war had at all approached to it in importance. Hitherto the career of the French armies had been one of almost unbroken success; and even though the talents of the Archduke Charles and the firmness of the Russians had for a time arrested the torrent, yet it had been suspended only to break out shortly after with accumulated force, and sweep away every obstacle which courage, combination, or genius could oppose to its progress. Even at their lowest point of depression, disgrace had never sullied the Republican ranks; victorious or vanquished, they had ever commanded the respect of their enemies; no large bodies had laid down their arms; their retreat had ever been that of brave and honourable men. Now, however, a disaster such as France had rarely experienced since the battle of Pavia, had overtaken their standards: twenty thousand men had surrendered; the imperial eagles had found in Anda-

lusia the Caudine Forks. Fame and incorrect information gave greater importance to this triumph than even its intrinsic magnitude deserved. It was unknown or overlooked that it was by a skilful series of military movements on the one side, and an extraordinary combination of errors on the other, that Dupont had been brought to such hazardous straits; by the firmness of the Swiss and Walloon guards, the precision in fire of the Spanish artillery, and the inexperience of his own troops, that he had been compelled to surrender. It was generally imagined that the French veterans had laid down their arms to the Spanish peasants; it was unknown or forgotten that the victory was really gained by experienced soldiers: and the imaginations of men, both in the Peninsula and over all Europe, were set on fire by the belief that a new era had dawned upon mankind; that the superiority of disciplined troops and regular armies was at an end; and that popular enthusiasm and general zeal were all that were necessary to secure the victory, even over the greatest and most formidable veteran armies.

How widely this belief spread, how generally it was acted upon, and what oceans of blood it caused to be spilt in vain in Spain itself, will amply appear in the sequel of this history; and probably, by inspiring the people of that country with an overweening idea of their own strength, and of the capability of raw levies to contend with regular forces, it contributed, in no small degree, to that almost unbroken train of disasters in the field which their armies, when unsupported by the British, subsequently experienced during the remainder of the war. But in the first instance it produced a prodigious and most important burst of exultation and enthusiasm. It determined the conduct of many of the grandees and nobles of Spain, who had at Bayonne adhered to the usurper, but now, with the Dukes del Infantado and del Parque, Cevallos and Penuela, rejoined the ranks of their countrymen; and by throwing the capital and chief towns of the kingdom, with the exception of the frontier fortresses, into the hands of the insurgents, gave the struggle, in the eyes of all Europe, as well as of the people themselves,² the character of a

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

38.
Disastrous
effect of the
delusive opi-
nion enter-
tained of this
victory.

¹ Montg. vi.
345. Foy, iv.
110, 114.
Lond. i. 97.
Tor. i. 378.
Nell. i. 124.
125. Jom. ii
64.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

national contest. Nor was the effect less momentous over the whole Continent, by affording a convincing proof that the French were not invincible, and opening the eyes of all governments to the immense addition which the military force, on which they had hitherto exclusively relied, might receive from the ardour and enthusiasm of the people.

39.
Opinion of
Napoleon on
this capitula-
tion.

Napoleon was at Bordeaux when the account of the capitulation reached him. Never, since the disaster at Trafalgar, had he been so completely overwhelmed : for a time he could not speak ; the excess of his depression excited the alarm of his ministers. "Is your Majesty unwell?" said the minister for foreign affairs, Maret. "No."—"Has Austria declared war?" "Would to God that were all!"—"What, then, has happened?" The Emperor recounted the humiliating details of the capitulation, and added, "That an army should be beaten is nothing—it is the daily fate of war, and is easily repaired ; but that an army should submit to a dishonourable capitulation is a stain on the glory of our arms which can never be effaced. Wounds inflicted on honour are incurable. The moral effect of this catastrophe will be terrible. What ! they have had the infamy to consent that the havresacks of our soldiers should be searched like those of robbers ! Could I have ever expected that of General Dupont, a man whom I loved, and was rearing up to become a marshal ? They say he had no other way to prevent the destruction of the army, to save the lives of the soldiers ! Better, far better, to have perished with arms in their hands—that not one should have escaped ! Their death would have been glorious : we should have avenged them. You can always supply the place of soldiers : honour alone, when once lost, can never be regained."¹

¹ Thib. vi.
439.

40.
Shameful
violation of
the capitula-
tion by the
Spaniards.

If the capitulation itself was dishonourable to the French arms, the subsequent violation of it by the Spaniards was still more disgraceful to the victors, and remains a dark stain on the Castilian good faith. From the moment that the long file of prisoners began their march towards Cadiz as the place of their embarkation, it was found to be extremely difficult to restrain the indignation of the people, who loudly complained that so

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

large a body of men, for the most part stained by robbery or murder committed in Spain, should be forwarded to France, apparently for no other purpose but that they might be again let loose in the Peninsula to commit similar devastations. Alarmed at the increase and serious character of the excitement, the junta of Seville consulted Castanos and Morla, the governor of Cadiz, on the course which they should adopt. The first, with the honour and good faith of a gallant soldier, in opposition to the public clamour, insisted that the capitulation should be religiously observed;—the latter, setting aside every other consideration in the desire to gain a temporary popularity with the multitude, contended that no treaty could be binding with men who had committed such enormities on the Spanish soil as the French prisoners; that to let them return to France, loaded with the spoil of Cordova, torn from the wretched inhabitants in open violation of the laws of war, would be a palpable act of insanity; and that, having once got them in their power, the only sensible course was to detain them till the war was over. These specious but sophistical arguments, unworthy of a Spanish officer, found a responsive echo in the breast of the infuriated multitude; the public effervescence increased as they advanced in their march. In consequence of the discovery of precious spoils in the knapsacks of some of the soldiers at Lebrixa, a tumult ensued between the peasantry and the prisoners, which cost many lives to the latter; the sacred vases of Cordova and Jaen were loudly demanded; and at Port St Mary's the accidental circumstance of one of these holy cups falling from the havresack of a soldier gave rise to such a tumult, that a general search of the baggage could no longer be prevented.¹

¹ Tor. i. 375, 376. Foy, iv. 107, 108. Nap. i. 125, 126.

These disorders were, perhaps, unavoidable in the circumstances in which the Spanish government of the province was situated, and the unexampled treachery with which they had been assailed by the French; but for the subsequent violation of the capitulation no sort of apology can be found. Desirous of maintaining their popularity, the junta of Seville acceded to the opinion of Morla, in which they in vain endeavoured to get Lord Collingwood and Sir Hew Dalrymple to concur. In-

41.
And their disgraceful treatment of the prisoners.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

stead of being sent by sea to France, the soldiers and regimental officers were crowded together into the hulks of Cadiz, where, such were the privations and misery to which they were subjected, very few remained at the conclusion of the war.* Dupont, the officers of his staff, and all the generals, were permitted to return to France; but the remainder, nearly eighteen thousand in number, were kept in lingering suffering in their dismal captivity, and, with the exception of a few who accepted service under the Spanish government, and took the first opportunity to desert to their beloved eagles, and those contained in one hulk, who overpowered their guards during the night and contrived to float her across to the lines of their countrymen three years afterwards, during the siege of Cadiz, hardly any ever revisited their native country.† This frightful act of injustice was as impolitic as it was disgraceful.¹ It gave the French, in their turn, too fair a ground for inveighing against

¹ Foy, iv. 107, 109.
Tor. i. 375, 377. Nap. i. 125, 127.
South. i. 502, 510. Collingwood, ii. 124.

* Sir Hew Dalrymple's answer to the junta of Seville, when his opinion was asked on this subject, is worthy of a place in history. "It is quite clear that the capitulation is binding on the contracting parties, so far as they have the means of carrying it into execution. The laws of honour, not considerations of expediency, should ever govern soldiers in solemn stipulations of this kind; the surrender of General Vedel could only be supposed to have arisen from the confidence which he placed in the honour which characterised the Spanish nation. The reputation of a government, especially one newly formed, is public property, which ought not to be lightly squandered. The matter, therefore, is clear on considerations of honour and justice: even viewed in the light of expedience, it is far from being beyond dispute." Lord Collingwood, when applied to, answered, that if the Spanish government had not scamen enough to man transport-vessels for conveying the troops, he would order British scamen to fit out their merchant-vessels for that purpose: that the capitulation must be observed so far as possible: if the conditions were impossible, they annulled themselves."—SOUTHHEY, i. 502, 504; COLLINGWOOD'S *Memoirs*, ii. 127, 128.

† The fate of the generals and officers who were returned to France from Cadiz, was hardly less deplorable than that of their comrades who lingered in prolonged torments on board the Spanish hulks. Dupont and all the generals were immediately arrested and sent to prison, where they lingered, without either trial or investigation, for many years afterwards. General Marescot, who, though in a subaltern rank, had taken a certain part in the negotiation, loudly, but in vain, demanded to be brought to a court-martial. Neither he nor Dupont, nor any of the superior officers connected with the capitulation of Baylen, were ever more heard of till after the fall of Napoleon in 1814. In 1812, a court of inquiry sat on the generals, and condemned them all: but public opinion was far from supporting their decision. Shortly after (1st May 1812), an imperial decree forbade, on pain of death, any capitulation in the field which should amount to a laying down of arms. Such was Napoleon's irritation with regard to every thing connected with this convention, that, when he afterwards saw General Legendre, who, as chief of the staff to Dupont, had officially affixed his signature to the treaty, he was seized with a trembling from head to foot, and his indignation exhaled in these words:—"How, General! did your hand not wither when you signed that infamous capitulation?" He never afterwards heard Baylen alluded to without evincing such indignation as showed how deeply it had wounded his mind.—FOY, iv. 110, 113.

Feb. 17, 1812.
May 1.

the perfidy of their enemies, exasperated the feelings of their armies, who had first entered into this contest with lukewarm dispositions or undisguised aversion, and repeatedly afterwards stimulated them to desperate and sanguinary resistance, under circumstances when, with a more trustworthy enemy, they would have entered into terms of accommodation.

The fatal news of the capitulation of Baylen arrived at Madrid on the 29th July, and diffused universal consternation among the adherents of Joseph. A council of war was immediately summoned by Savary; and opinions were much divided on the course which should be pursued. Moncey proposed that Bessières' division should be recalled, and that with their united forces they should take up a position in front of the capital, and defend it to the last extremity. But Savary, to whom the situation which he held as lieutenant-general of the King, as well as the known confidence which he enjoyed with the Emperor, gave a preponderating voice in the deliberations, strongly urged the necessity of retiring to the northward, and taking counsel from circumstances, as to the point to which the retreat should be prolonged. On the 30th July the intrusive King commenced his retreat: the hospitals had previously been evacuated for Bayonne; the heavy artillery, which could not be brought away, amounting to eighty pieces, was spiked; but the retiring monarch and his military satellites carried off with them all the jewels and precious articles from the palaces they had so recently occupied. They retired by the great road to Burgos, where headquarters were established on the 9th August; the rearguard collecting as it went along all the garrisons of the towns and castles which had been occupied by the French troops to the south of the Ebro. They experienced no molestation from the Spaniards during their retreat; notwithstanding which, all the villages and hamlets through which they passed were given up to pillage, and a great number burned to the ground. Soon after Joseph reached Burgos, Bessières arrived with his corps, and Verdier came up with the force which had been engaged in the siege of Saragossa;¹ so that, including Moncey's corps and the troops brought up from Madrid,

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

42.

Departure of Joseph from Madrid, and concentration of the French troops behind the Ebro.

¹ Foy, iv. 117, 124.

Thib. vi. 442, 443. Sav. iii. 275, 277.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

above fifty thousand veteran troops could, notwithstanding all the losses of the campaign, be collected for the defence of the Ebro.*

While this decisive stroke was struck in the south of Spain, the contest had already assumed elsewhere a sanguinary character; the success had been more checkered in the Catalonian mountains; and the British army, under the guidance of WELLINGTON, had chased the French eagles from the rock of Lisbon.

43.
Campaign in
Catalonia.

Napoleon, who was by no means aware of the almost insurmountable obstacles which the tenacious spirit and rugged mountains of Catalonia were to oppose to his arms, had directed Duhesme to co-operate with Lefebvre Desnouettes in the siege of Saragossa. In order to accomplish this object, that general, early in June, fitted out two corps: the first, four thousand five hundred strong, under the orders of General Chabran, was despatched towards the south, with instructions to make itself master of Tortosa and Tarragona, and then proceed on and co-operate with Marshal Monecy in the attack on Valencia; while the second, under General Schwartz, consisting of three thousand eight hundred men, after punishing Mauresa, destroying the powder-mills there, and levying a heavy contribution on its inhabitants, was to push on to Lerida, and, after securing that important fortress,¹ give its aid to Lefebvre before the walls of

June 4.
¹ Foy, iv.
143, 147.
Duhesme, 18.
Nap. i. 75.
Tor. i. 309.
Foy, 312.

July 10.

* Savary was blamed by Napoleon for this retreat to the Ebro, and he alleged that the line of the Douro might have been maintained, and the operations against Saragossa in consequence not interrupted. In justice to the French general, however, it must be observed, that his situation in the capital, after the surrender of Dupont, had become extremely critical: and that the losses which the troops at the capital had undergone, were such as to preclude the hope of a successful stand being made against the united Spanish armies which might advance from the south. Shortly after his arrival at Madrid he had written in these luminous and explicit terms to the Emperor, in a despatch which throws great light on the state of the contest at that period:—"It is no longer a mere affair in which, by punishing the leaders, a revolt may be suppressed. If the arrival of the King does not pacify the country, we shall have a regular war on our hands with the troops of the line, and one of extermination with the peasantry. The system of sending moveable columns over the provinces, is likely to induce partial checks which will lead to the spreading of the insurrection. It is indispensable that your Majesty should consider seriously the means of carrying on the war. We lose four hundred men a-month in the hospitals alone; our army can in no respect be compared to that which occupies Germany. Every thing has been calculated according to the turn which it was expected affairs would assume, not that which they have actually taken. Many battalions have not four officers; the whole cavalry is fit for the hospital together. The crowds of young and presumptuous men who crowd the army, contribute rather to embarrassment than any thing else. There is an incalculable difference between such coxcombs and a steady veteran sergeant or officer." SAVARY to NAPOLEON; FOY, iv. 34, 35.

Saragossa. These columns quitted Barcelona early in June, and directed their march to their respective points of destination ; but both experienced defeat. The tocsin was ringing on all the hills ; the villages were deserted ; the woods and higher parts of the mountains, the rugged passes and inaccessible thickets, formed so many rallying points to the courageous Somatenes.*

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

Schwartz, indeed, in his march towards Saragossa, forced the celebrated pass of Bruch, though beset with armed men ; but, advancing a little farther, he encountered a disaster at Casa Mansana. The villagers assailed the invaders with showers of stones, balls, and even boiling water from the roofs of the houses : the peasants, who had fled in disorder a few minutes before through the streets, returned to the charge. Threatened on all sides, Schwartz resolved to retreat, which he effected at first in good order ; but his advanced guard having attempted, during the night, to force the passage of the town of Esparraguera, which lay on his road, was repulsed with loss, and his troops, thrown into disorder by that nocturnal check, were never able to gain their proper array till they found refuge, two days after, under the cannon

44.
Defeat of
Schwartz
near Casa
Mansana.
June 6.

of Barcelona. Chabran, whose route lay through a less mountainous district, reached Tarragona in safety on the 7th, and got possession of that important town without opposition : but Duhesme was so much alarmed by the repulse of Schwartz, that he hastily recalled him to Barcelona. So dangerous is it to make a retrograde movement while engaged with an insurrection, that a very severe resistance was experienced in the retreat, at places where not a shot had been fired during the advance. Irritated by this opposition and the sanguinary excesses of the peasants, the French set fire to Villa-Franca as they retired ; and Duhesme having sent Count Theodore Lecchi with the Italian division and Schwartz's troops to his assistance, the united columns again approached the pass of Bruch : but, finding the Somatenes posted on its rugged cliffs in even greater strength than before,¹ they fell back after a bloody skir-

June 8.

June 14.
¹ Tor. i. 309.
315. Nap. i.
75, 77. Foy,
iv. 143, 151.
Duhesme, 18,
19.

* The *Somatenes* are the *levée-en-masse*, which, by an ancient law of Catalonia, are bound to turn out and defend their parishes whenever the *Somaten* or alarm-bell is heard from the churches.—TORENO, i. 309.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

45.
Universal
spread of the
insurrection.

mish, and regained the shelter of Barcelona, pursued up to the very gates by the dropping fire and taunting scoffs of their gallant though rustic opponents.*

These defeats produced the greater sensation, both among the French and Spaniards, that they were gained, not by regular troops, but a tumultuary array of peasants, wholly undisciplined, and most of whom had then for the first time been engaged either in military service or exercise. They occasioned in consequence a universal insurrection in Catalonia; the cities equally as the mountains caught the flame. The burghers of Lerida, Tortosa, Tarragona, Gerona, and all the towns in the province not garrisoned by French troops, closed their gates, manned their ramparts, and elected juntas to direct measures of defence; while the mountain districts, which embraced four-fifths of the province, obeyed the animating call of the Somaten, and, under the guidance of their parish priests, organised a desperate Vendéan warfare. Forty regiments, of a thousand men each, were ordered to be raised for active operations among these formidable mountaineers. Regular officers were, for the most part, obtained to direct their organisation; the ranks were in a short time complete, and, for the service of light troops, of a very efficient description. An equal force was directed to be prepared as a reserve, in case their mountain fastnesses should be threatened by the enemy. The peculiar nature of these extensive and thickly-peopled hill-districts, as well as the character and resolution of their inhabitants; their rugged precipices, wood-clad steeps, and terraced slopes; their villages, perched like eyries on the summit of cliffs, and numerous forts and castles, each susceptible of a separate defence; their bold and energetic inhabitants, consisting of lawless smugglers, or hardy peasants, long habituated to the enjoyment of almost unbounded practical freedom—rendered this warfare one of a peculiarly hazardous and laborious description.¹ †

¹ Foy, iv. 151, 155. Tor. i. 315, 316. Nap. i. 77.

* The inhabitants of Bruch, to commemorate their victory, erected a stone in the pass, with this pompous though laconic inscription:—"Victores Marengo, Austerlitz, et Jena, hic victi fuerunt diebus vi. et xiv. Junii, anno 1808."—Foy, iv. 151.

† Though locally situated in an unlimited monarchy, the province of Catalonia, like those of Navarre and Biscay, has long enjoyed such extensive civil privileges as savour rather of democratic equality than despotic authority. Its

Aware of the necessity of striking a decisive blow in the present critical state of affairs in the province, Duhesme conceived that a sudden *coup-de-main* against GERONA, which lies on the direct road to France, would both re-establish his communications, which the insurrections in all directions had totally intercepted, and strike a general terror into the enemy. Accordingly, two days after the return of the former ill-fated expedition, he set out in the direction of that town, with six thousand of his best troops, taking the coast-road to avoid the fortress of Hostalrich, which was in the hands of the enemy. After cutting his way with great slaughter through a large body of Somatenes who endeavoured to obstruct his progress, he appeared on the 20th before Gerona. Little preparation had been made to repel an assault; but the gates were closed, and the inhabitants, in great numbers, were on the walls prepared to defend their hearths. Having at length got his scaling ladders ready, and diverted the attention of the besieged by a skirmish with the Somatenes on the plains at a distance from the ramparts, the assaulting columns suddenly approached the walls at five in the afternoon. Though they got very near without being perceived, and a few brave men reached the summit, they were repulsed in two successive attacks with great slaughter; and Duhesme having in vain tried the effect of a negotiation to induce a surrender, returned, by forced marches, to Barcelona, harassed at every step by the Somatenes, who, descending in great strength from the hills, inflicted a severe loss on his retreating columns.¹

After this defeat, the whole plain round Barcelona, called the Llobregat, was filled with the enemy's troops; and General Duhesme, enraged at finding himself thus beset in the capital of the province, marched out against

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

46.

Defeat of a
coup-de-main
by the
French
against
Gerona.
June 16.

June 17.

June 20.

¹ Nap. i. 77,
80. Foy, iv.
151, 159.
Tor. i. 315,
317.

social state differs altogether from that of Arragon, though they were so long united under the same sceptre. Nowhere, except in this mountain republic, is there so ardent a thirst after political freedom, or so large an enjoyment, at least in the mountainous districts, of its practical blessings. The inhabitants cherish the most profound hatred of the French, whom they accuse of having excited their fathers to revolt against the government of Madrid, and abandoned them, when the contest was no longer conducive to their interests. In the long and opulent district which runs along the sea-shore, and contains the flourishing seaports of Tarragona, Rosas, and Barcelona, commercial interests prevail; and the alliance and consequent trade with England were as much the object of desire as the withering union with France had been a subject of aversion.—Foy, iv. 137, 138.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

47.
Expedition
against Rosas,
which is de-
feated.
June 30.

July 5.

July 11.

July 22.

¹ Tor. i. 38,
39. Nap. i.
82, 83. Foy,
iv. 169, 172.
St Cyr,
Guerre dans
la Catal. 14,
17. Castanos,
i. 32, 84.

48.
Unsuccessful
siege of
Gerona.

them, a week afterwards, and defeated a large body of the peasantry at the bridge of Molinos del Rey, capturing all their artillery. Rallying, however, at their old fastnesses of Bruch and Igualado, they again, when the French retired, returned to the Llobregat, and not only shut up the enemy within the ramparts of Barcelona, but established a communication with the insurgents in the interior, along the sea-coast, from the Pyrenean frontier to the mouth of the Ebro, which all became the theatre of insurrection. Napoleon, to whom the prolongation of the war in so many different quarters of Spain had become a subject of great uneasiness, no sooner received intelligence of these untoward events than he directed Duhesme to issue from Barcelona, relieve Figueras, where four hundred French were closely blockaded by the insurgent peasantry, and afterwards carry by assault both Rosas and Gerona. General Reille, whom he sent forward with a large convoy guarded by five thousand men, defeated the Somatenes before Figueras, and raised the blockade of that fortress; but when, encouraged by this success, he attempted a *coup-de-main* against Rosas, he sustained a repulse; and finding himself daily more closely straitened by the insurgents, was obliged to retire with considerable loss towards Gerona. About the same time the Spanish affairs in the whole province acquired a degree of consistency to which they had never previously attained, by the conclusion of a treaty between Lord Collingwood and the Marquis Palacios, governor of the Balearic Isles, in virtue of which the whole disposable force in those islands was conveyed to the Catalonian shores, and thirteen hundred good troops were directed towards Gerona. At the same time, Palacios himself, with four thousand five hundred men, and thirty-seven pieces of cannon, landed at Tarragona, where their presence excited a most extraordinary degree of enthusiasm.¹

Meanwhile Duhesme, with the main body of his forces, six thousand strong, a considerable train of heavy artillery, and every thing requisite for a siege, set out from Barcelona and took the road for Gerona. He was long delayed, however, on the road, which runs close to the sea-shore, on the one side by the fire of an English frigate, under the command of LORD COCHRANE, which

sent a shower of balls among his columns whenever they came within range, and the desultory but incessant attacks of the Somatenes on the other. At length, after encountering great difficulties and experiencing a heavy loss, he succeeded in forcing his way, by the hill-road, to Hostalrich, which he summoned in vain to surrender; and leaving a few troops only to observe its garrison, he, by infinite skill and no small good fortune, avoided the guns of that fortress, and proceeded on to Gerona, under the walls of which he effected a junction with Reille's troops, who had come up from Rosas. Their united strength being now, notwithstanding all their losses, above nine thousand men, operations in form were commenced against the place. Before this could be done, however, the succours from Majorca had been thrown into the town: and as the besiegers were themselves cut off from all communication, both with their reserve magazines at Barcelona and with the frontier of France, by the incessant activity of the peasantry, who lay in wait for and frequently intercepted the convoys, the works advanced very slowly. On the 15th August, however, the breach of Fort Montjuic was declared practicable, and an assault was about to commence, when the besiegers were themselves assailed by a confused but formidable body, ten thousand strong, which appeared in their rear.¹

This consisted, one-half of regular troops, which the Count Caldagues had brought up from Tarragona, the other of Somatenes and Miquelets, with which he had augmented his force during its march along the coast of Catalonia. Count Theodore Lecchi, who was left in charge of Barcelona, was in no condition to oppose their passage almost within range of the guns of the fortress; for the troops he commanded, hardly four thousand strong, were barely adequate to guard its extensive works, and the Miquelets, stationed on the heights which overhang the city, had carried their audacity to such a pitch, as not only to keep up a constant fire on the French sentinels, but even make signals to the disturbed multitude in the streets to revolt. When this powerful force approached Gerona, the besieged made a general sally on the French lines, and with such vigour, that they penetrated into the batteries through the embrasures of

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

July 24.

July 22.

Aug. 15.

¹ Tor. i. 37.

38. Foy, iv.

172, 185.

Cabanes, ii.

62, 74. 8.

Cyr, i. 40, 43.

49.

The siege is raised by the Spaniards from Tarragona.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

the guns, spiked the heavy cannon, and set fire to the works; while Duhesme, with the great body of the besiegers' force, was sufficiently engaged in observing the enemy which threatened them from the outside. Finding it totally impossible to continue the siege, Duhesme broke up in the night, and, dividing his force into two columns, took the road for Barcelona. But here fresh difficulties awaited him: two English frigates, under the able direction of Lord Cochrane, cannonaded and raked the road by the sea-coast; overhanging cliffs prevented them from getting out of the destructive range; while the route by the mountains in the interior, besides being closed by the cannon of Hostalrich, was in many places steep and intersected by ravines, and beset by armed peasants, who, from the rocks and woods above, kept up a destructive fire upon the troops beneath. In these circumstances the French general did not hesitate to sacrifice his artillery and stores; and thus lightened, he succeeded in fighting his way back, by mountain-paths on the summit of the cliffs which overhang the sea, amidst a constant fire, to Barcelona. In this disastrous expedition above two thousand men and thirty pieces of artillery, besides extensive stores, were lost; and at its conclusion the French possessed nothing in Catalonia but the fortress of Barcelona and the citadel of Figueras.¹

Unbounded was the joy which these extraordinary successes in every part of Spain excited among its inhabitants. The variety of quarters in which they had arisen augmented their moral effect: it was supposed that popular energy was irresistible, when it had triumphed over its enemies at once in Andalusia and Arragon, Valencia and Catalonia. Abandoning themselves to a pleasing and allowable, though short-lived illusion, the Spaniards generally believed that the war was at an end; that the Castilian soil was finally delivered from its invaders; and that, relieved of all disquietude as to the defence of their own country, the only question was, when they should unite their victorious arms to those of the English, and carry the torrent of invasion across the Pyrenees into the French plains.² These enthusiastic feelings rose to a perfect climax when the Spanish army from Andalusia entered the capital, in great pomp, with Castanos at their

¹ Cabanes, ii. 62, 81. Foy, iv. 172, 193. Tor. i. 37, 40. Nap. i. 85, 86. St Cyr. 40, 47. Duhesme, 28, 39.

50.
Universal transports in the Peninsula. Entry of the Spanish troops into the capital.

² Tor. ii. 82, 85. Nap. i. 287. South. ii. 287.

head, under a majestic triumphal arch, erected by the citizens to do honour to their arrival ; and the whole of Spain, now delivered from the enemy, with the exception of the small portion occupied by the French army in Navarre and on the Ebro, joined in one universal chorus of national exultation and hatred of the invaders.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

Aug. 25.

The press joined its influence to increase the excitement. Newspapers, warmly advocating the patriotic cause, were established at Madrid, Seville, Cadiz, and the other chief towns of Spain ; and by their vehement declamation added to the general enthusiasm, as much as by their extravagant boasting, they weakened the sense of the necessity of present exertion, and thus diminished the chance of bringing the contest in the end to a successful issue. But in the midst of the universal exultation, it was observed with regret that few vigorous or efficient measures were adopted by the many separate and independent juntas to prosecute the war against the enemy ; a feeling increased by the calamitous issue of the revolt of Bilboa, which had taken up arms upon receipt of the glorious news from Andalusia. The inhabitants, in the first instance, had succeeded in expelling the French garrison ; but being unsupported by any aid from Asturias or Galicia, the place was quickly recaptured, with great slaughter, by the French division of Merle. This was done by the express commands of Joseph Buonaparte, to whom this dangerous movement, in a town of such importance, so near his line of communication with France, had been the subject of no small disquietude ; and who boasted in his despatches, that "the fire of the insurrection at Bilboa had been extinguished in the blood of twelve hundred men."¹

51.
Neglect of
any efficient
measures in
the general
exultation.

Aug. 5.

Aug. 16.

¹ South. ii.
287, 288. Tor.
ii. 82, 85.
Nap. I. 287,
288.

Meanwhile events of a still more glorious and decisive character had liberated the kingdom of Portugal from its oppressors. In every phase of modern history it has been observed that Portugal has, sooner or later, followed the course of changes which public feeling had established in Spain ; and it was hardly to be expected that so great and heart-stirring an event as the resurrection of Castilian independence was not to find a responsive echo in a kingdom so closely neighbouring, and equally suffering

52.
Affairs of
Portugal, and
disarming of
the Spanish
troops in that
country.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

under the evils of Gallic oppression. At a very early period, accordingly, symptoms of an alarming effervescence manifested themselves in Portugal ; and Napoleon, appreciating more justly than Junot the probable course of events in that kingdom, strongly enjoined him to abandon the pompous proclamations in which he was endeavouring to win the affections of the people, and in good earnest prepare for military operations.* Not anticipating, however, any immediate hostilities, he ordered him to detach four thousand men to support Bessières in Leon, and three thousand to co-operate with Dupont in Andalusia. But these detachments were rendered impossible by the pressure of events in Portugal itself. No sooner did the intelligence of the massacre at Madrid and the insurrection in Galicia reach Oporto, than the Spanish troops there, ten thousand strong, dispossessed the French authorities and marched off in a body towards Galicia, from whence, as already mentioned, they were forwarded to Leon in time to share in the disaster of Rio Seco. The inhabitants, in the first moment of enthusiasm, installed insurrectionary authorities in room of the French ones who had been dispossessed. But after the departure of the Spanish troops, they became alarmed at their own boldness, and hastened to reinstate the tricolor flag, and to renew their protestations of fidelity to the French general at Lisbon. The moment, however, that he was apprised of the events at Oporto, Junot made preparations to effect the disarming of the Spanish troops in the capital ; and with such secrecy and decision were his measures taken, that before they were well aware of the danger impending over them, they were all surrounded by greatly superior masses of French troops, and compelled to surrender.¹ By this able

June 5.

June 9.
¹ Lond. i.
117, 119.
South. ii. 41,
47. Nevis,
99, 109. Foy,
iv. 202, 210.

* "What is the use," said he, "of promising to the Portuguese what you will never have the means of fulfilling? Nothing is more praiseworthy, without doubt, than to gain the affections of the people ; but it should never be forgotten, that the primary object of a general should be the safety of his soldiers. Instantly disarm the Portuguese ; watch over the soldiers who have been sent to their homes, in order that their chiefs may not form so many centres of insurrection in the interior. Keep your eye on the Spanish troops ; secure the important fortresses of Almeida and Elvas. Lisbon is too large and populous a city ; its population is necessarily hostile. Withdraw your troops from it ; place them in barracks on the sea-coast. Keep them in breath—well disciplined, massed, and instructed, in order to be in a condition to combat the English army, which sooner or later will disembark on the coasts of Portugal."—*NAPOLEON to JUNOT, May 24, 1808 ; Foy, iv. 198, 199.*

stroke nearly five thousand Spanish troops were made prisoners, who might have been highly prejudicial to the French arms, if they had succeeded in withdrawing and forming the nucleus of an insurrection in the interior of the country.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

The flame, however, excited by the glorious intelligence of popular successes, which daily came pouring in from all parts of Spain, could not so easily be suppressed. The students at Coimbra were among the first to take up arms; the mountaineers of *Tras-os-Montes* speedily followed the example; the tocsins were heard in their lovely hills, arms and torches gleamed in their vine-clad vales; *Algarves* was speedily in open revolt; the *Alentejo* was known to be ripe for insurrection, and, at the summons of Colonel *Lopez de Souza*, soon after took up arms. Encouraged by this revolt in their neighbourhood, the inhabitants of *Oporto* a second time hoisted the standard of independence. A junta was speedily formed in that opulent city, which shared the supreme direction of affairs with the bishop, who early signalled himself by his zeal in the patriot cause. The insurrection in the province of *Entre Douro-e-Minho* appeared so formidable, that Junot directed General *Loison* with a strong division to proceed against it from *Almeida*. But though he at first obtained some success, yet, as he advanced into the mountains, his communications were so completely cut off, and the insurrection appeared so formidable on all sides, that he was obliged to return to *Lisbon* by *Celorica* and *Guarda*, at which places he routed the peasantry with great slaughter.* In the south, the patriots gained considerable successes against the French detachments which endeavoured to penetrate into the *Alentejo* in the north-east; *Abrantes* was threatened by the insurgents of the valley of the *Tezers*; in the east, the revolt at *Beija* was only extinguished by a bloody nocturnal assault of the town, after a rapid march, by a French brigade.† Sur-

53.
Progress of
the insur-
rection.

June 11.

June 9.

* "In this expedition," says *Thiebault*, "we lost sixty men killed and one hundred and forty wounded: of the insurgents at least four thousand were killed or wounded on the different fields of battle."—*THIEBAULT*, 155.

† The French general, *Thiebault*, boasts of this as a great exploit. "Twelve hundred Portuguese were put to death in the conflict: no quarter was shown to any one with arms in his hands." The town was afterwards set on fire and plundered; and the worst military excesses perpetrated against the wretched inhabitants. *Kellerman* shortly afterwards said, in a proclamation to the people of

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

June 9.

¹ Thiebault,
131, 165, 174.
Nap. i. 161,
163. Nevis, i.
205.

rounded in this manner with embarrassments, Junot, after holding a council of war, the invariable sign of experienced difficulty, again despatched Loison with four thousand men to Abrantes. In his progress he had several severe actions with the Portuguese peasants, who were dispersed with great slaughter, but who evinced, by their courage in disaster, what materials were to be found among them for a formidable resistance in future times. He returned to Lisbon, having irritated the insurrection more by his cruelty than he had overawed it by his success.¹

54.
Operations of
Loison in the
Alentejo.
July 25.

His recall to the capital was rendered necessary by the progress of the insurrection in the Alentejo, which had elected a junta, and established a sort of provisional government at Evora. Resolved to strike a decisive blow in that quarter, where the proximity of English succours from Gibraltar rendered the revolt peculiarly formidable, Junot fitted out a more powerful expedition, consisting of seven thousand infantry and twelve hundred horse, with eight guns, which was sent forth under the command of the sanguinary Loison. After dispersing several armed assemblages which strove in vain to obstruct his progress, this general came up with the main body of the insurgents posted in front of Evora. Ten thousand Portuguese peasants, and four thousand Spanish troops, who had advanced to support them from Badajoz, were there assembled, with twelve pieces of cannon. They were wholly unable, however, to withstand the shock of the French legions; at the first onset, the undisciplined peasantry fled from the terrible charge of their dragoons. The Spanish auxiliaries, seeing themselves left alone with the whole weight of the action on their hands, retired in haste, and were speedily thrown into disorder; and in the general confusion, the victorious troops entered the town, where a feeble resistance only was attempted, but an indiscriminate massacre immediately commenced. Neither age nor sex was spared: armed and unarmed were inhumanly put to the sword: it is the boast of the French historians,

July 29.

Alentejo—"Beija had revolted; Beija is no more. Its guilty inhabitants have been put to the sword; its houses delivered up to pillage and the flames. Thus shall all those be treated who listen to the counsels of a perfidious rebellion; and with a senseless hatred take up arms against us."—THIEBAULT, 135, 136; SOUTHEY, i. 105.

that while "they lost only two hundred and ninety, eight thousand were slain or wounded on the part of the insurgents."¹ Never, while Portuguese blood flows in the human veins, will the remembrance of that dreadful day be forgotten: never will the French be any other than an object of execration to the descendants of those who perished in that inhuman massacre. But the cup of human suffering was full; the hour of retribution was fast approaching; and Loison was awakened from his fancied dream of security, and the further prosecution of his blood-stained progress towards Elvas, by intelligence that a BRITISH ARMY HAD APPEARED OFF THE COAST OF PORTUGAL.²

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Thiebault, 165.

² Thiebault, 131, 175.
Nap. i. 161, 165. South. ii. 72, 155.
Nevis, i. 205.
Foy, iv. 246, 272.

Ever since the insurrection in the Peninsula had assumed a serious aspect, the English government had resolved upon sending out powerful military succours to its assistance, and at length bringing the strength of the two nations to a fair trial with land forces. Fortunately a body of about ten thousand men was already assembled at Cork; having been collected there by the preceding administration, for the purpose of an expedition against South America:—a proposed diversion of force, at a time when every sabre and bayonet was required in European warfare, which appears almost inconceivable; unless, as Colonel Napier sarcastically observes, it was projected in imitation of the Romans, who sent troops to Spain when Hannibal was at their gates.³ The command of the expedition was given to SIR

55.

The English cabinet resolve on sending succours to Portugal.

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, whose great capacity had been evinced in the glorious fields of Indian warfare, and more recently in the easier conquest of the Danish militia; and General Miranda, the able adventurer, who had so long been concerned in projects for the separation of the Spanish colonies from the mother country, was given to understand, that no countenance could now be shown by the British government to any such designs. Two smaller divisions were soon afterwards prepared, and set sail from Ramsgate and Margate; and orders were sent to Sir John Moore, who, with twelve thousand men, had been sent to Gottenburg to aid the King of Sweden in his heroic defence of his kingdom against Russia⁴—an offer

³ Nap. i. 180.

⁴ Nap. i. 180.
Gurwood, iv. 21, 24.

CHAP.

LIV.

1808.

56.
Strange substitution of successive commanders to the British expedition.

which that gallant monarch declined to accept*—to return forthwith to England, to form a further reinforcement of the armies in the Peninsula.

Though the direction of the Cork expedition, however, was intrusted to Sir Arthur, yet a senior officer, Sir Harry Burrard, was appointed to supersede him in the command shortly after he landed in Portugal; who again was to retain the supreme direction only until Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived from Gibraltar. Thus, in the most momentous period of the campaign, that in which the British troops were first to be engaged with the enemy, and when they were exposed to all the difficulty incident to a first landing on a hostile shore, they were to be intrusted successively to the command of three different generals; an arrangement as characteristic of the happy ignorance of military affairs which at that period prevailed in the British government, as the cheerful acquiescence of their first commander in the appointment of any officer, how unknown soever to fame, over his head, was of the single-hearted feeling and patriotic devotion which, in every age, has been found to be the accompaniment of real greatness.^{1†}

¹ Well. Desp. by Gurwood, iv. 1, 3, 21, 22, 43.

The expedition, under the command of Sir Arthur,

* The particulars of this expedition, and the causes of the disagreement with the Swedish monarch, will be found below, chap. lxx. which treats of the war between Sweden and Russia.

† When Sir A. Wellesley received the command of the expedition at Cork, government gave him no reason to believe that he was to be superseded in the supreme direction of it. The first intimation he received of that intention was by a letter from Lord Castlereagh, dated 15th July 1808, which reached him when at sea, off Mondego Bay. Many officers, who had held the situations and achieved the victories which he had in India, would have at once resigned the command in which he was now reduced to so subordinate a station; but Sir Arthur acted otherwise. In answer to Lord Castlereagh, he said—"Pole and Burghersh have apprised me of the arrangements for the future command of the army. All that I can say on this subject is, that whether I am to command the army or not, or am to quit it, I shall do my best to insure its success; and you may depend on it that I shall not hurry the operations, or commence them one moment sooner than they ought to be commenced, in order that I may acquire the credit of the success. The government will determine for me in what way they will employ me hereafter, either here or elsewhere." When asked by an intimate friend, after his return, how he, who had commanded armies of 40,000 men, received the Order of the Bath and the thanks of parliament, could thus submit to be reduced to the rank of a brigadier of infantry, he replied—"For this reason—I was nimuk-wallah, as we say in the East; I have ate of the King's salt; and therefore I consider it my duty to serve with zeal and promptitude when or wherever the King or his government may think proper to employ me." Nor was this disinterested and high-minded patriotism and sense of duty without its final reward. Inferior men would probably have thrown up the command, and rested on the laurels of Seringapatam and Assaye; but Wellington pursued the path of duty under every slight, and he lived to strike down Napoleon on the field of Waterloo.—See GURWOOD'S *Despatches*, August 1, 1808, vol. iv. 43; and *Blackwood's Magazine*, xli. 714.

sailed from Cork on the 12th July, but the General himself preceded them in a fast-sailing frigate, and arrived at Corunna on the 20th. He immediately entered into communication with the Junta of Galicia, from whom he received the distressing intelligence of the defeat at Rio Seco; and was also made acquainted with the desire of the Spaniards in that quarter to receive no succours, except in arms, stores, and money, from England—a resolution of which it is hard to say, after such a disaster, whether it savoured more of magnanimous resolution or presumptuous confidence.* He found the opinion of all classes so unanimous in hatred of the French, “that no one dared to show that he was a friend to them.” Having supplied the Junta, therefore, with two hundred thousand pounds in money, and assured them of the speedy arrival of extensive military stores, which in a great measure elevated their spirits after their late misfortunes, he proceeded to the southward to secure the main objects of the expedition, which were, in the first instance, an attack upon the Tagus; and afterwards, the detachment of such a force to the southward as might effectually secure Cadiz from any attack by the French under Dupont. As the whole force of the expedition, when joined by the reinforcements from England, the corps of Sir John Moore, and that under General Spencer, which was off Cadiz, was estimated by government at thirty thousand men, it was thought that ample means existed to achieve both these objects. And as the primary condition of all successful military efforts, by a transmarine power, is the securing strong seaports as a base for the army, and a point of refuge in case of disaster, it is evident that the attainment of one or both of these objects was an indispensable preliminary to future operations. It was fortunate, however, that subsequent events rendered the dispersion of the English force, and the formation of a double base of operations unnecessary. The British army was thereby concentrated in Portugal,¹ where it had a

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

57.

Sir A. Wellesley takes the command of the expedition, and arrives off Mondego Bay.

¹ Gurw. iv. 20, 33. Lond. i. 114, 116. Nap. i. 187.

* “Notwithstanding the recent defeat of the Galician army, the Junta here have not expressed any wish to receive the assistance of British troops; and they again repeated, this morning, that they could put any number of men into the field if they were provided with arms and money; and I think this disinclination to receive the assistance of British troops, is founded in a great degree on the objection to give the command of their troops to British officers.”—WELLINGTON to LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Corunna, July 21, 1808*, GURWOOD, iv. 27.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

58.
Arrival of
the British
troops at
Mondego
Bay, and
proclamation
by Sir A.
Wellesley.

strong country to defend, a docile population to work upon, and a central position in the flank of the French armies in Spain to maintain.

Sir Arthur Wellesley arrived at Oporto on the 26th, and proceeded on with the expedition to Mondego Bay, where he arrived on the 30th July. Having there received intelligence of the surrender of Dupont, he deemed all operations in Andalusia unnecessary; and having sent orders to General Spencer to come round from the Bay of Cadiz and join him, he determined upon an immediate landing—a bold and decisive resolution, considering that his own force did not exceed ten thousand men, and Junot had fifteen thousand at Lisbon.* He accordingly issued a proclamation to the people of Portugal, eminently descriptive of the principles of that glorious struggle which was now about to commence,† and which his own talents and constancy, and the resolution of the three nations, now banded together, ultimately brought to so glorious a termination. At first Sir Arthur thought of landing on the small peninsula of Peniche, about seventy miles to the north of the Rock of Lisbon; but though the anchorage was safe and practicable, it was commanded by the guns of the fort at its extremity, which was still in the hands of the enemy. He therefore, by the advice of Sir Charles Cotton, selected in preference Mondego Bay, where the whole fleet was assembled on the 31st July.¹

On the following morning the disembarkation commenced; and notwithstanding the obstacles arising from a strong west wind and heavy surf, which occasioned the swamping of several boats, and the loss of many lives, it

* The exact number was 9280 sabres and bayonets—about 10,000 men, including subalterns and officers. Spencer's corps was 4793 strong—about 5000 men.—GURWOOD, iv. 20.

† “The English soldiers who land upon your shores do so with every sentiment of friendship, faith, and honour. The glorious struggle in which you are engaged is for all that is dear to man—the protection of your wives and children, the restoration of your lawful prince, the independence, nay, the existence of your kingdom, the preservation of your holy religion. Objects like these can only be attained by distinguished examples of fortitude and constancy. The noble struggle against the tyranny and usurpation of France will be jointly maintained by Portugal, Spain, and England; and, in contributing to the success of a cause so just and glorious, the views of his Britannic Majesty are the same as those by which you yourselves are animated.”—A. WELLESLEY'S *Letter*. It is seldom that a proclamation in the outset of a struggle so faithfully represents the real objects at issue in it; still seldomer that it so prophetically and truly describes its ultimate result after many and long-continued disasters.—See GURWOOD, iv. 46.

¹ Gurw. iv.
46. Nap. i.
190. Lond.
i. 190, 191.

was completed by the 5th, at which time General Spencer with his division came up, and was immediately put on shore. He had not received Sir Arthur's orders to join ; but with great presence of mind, and the true military spirit, the moment he heard of Dupont's surrender he made sail for the Tagus, from whence he was sent forward by Sir Charles Cotton to the general point of disembarkation. On the evening of the 8th the united forces, thirteen thousand strong, bivouacked on the beach, and on the following morning the advanced guard moved forward, and commenced that memorable march which, though deeply checkered with disaster, was destined to be never finally arrested till the British cavalry passed in triumph from Bayonne to Calais.¹

The troops took the field in the highest spirits, and the most perfect state of discipline and equipment, confident in their leader, and not less confident in themselves ; for even at this early period of the war it was the habit of the British soldiers, the habit bequeathed by centuries of glory, to admit of no doubt as to the issue of a combat. The Portuguese generals, who had six thousand men, were at first most extravagant in their demands, and would only consent to join the English upon condition that their troops should all be maintained from the British commissariat : a proposition so utterly unreasonable, when made by the natives of the country to their allies, just landed from their ships, that it thus early evinced, what the future progress of the war so clearly demonstrated, that jealousy of foreign co-operation, and aversion to foreign command, were nearly as strongly imprinted on their minds as hatred at the invaders. At length they consented to let General Freyre, with one brigade of infantry, fourteen hundred strong, and two hundred and fifty horse, remain with Sir Arthur ; but the main body was positively prohibited to advance beyond Leira on the road to Lisbon. The truth was, that they entertained a secret dread of the French troops, and, deeming the English totally inadequate to contend with them, they were unwilling to commit themselves by their side in a decisive affair. This defection of the native troops threw a chill over the British army, not from any doubt as to its ability

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

59.

Landing of
the army,
Aug. 1.
Aug. 5.

Aug. 8.

¹ Gurw. iv.
66, 67. Nap.
i. 190, 191.
Lond. 124,
125.

60.
March of the
British troops
to Roliça.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

Aug. 15.

¹ Gurw. iv.
71, 80.
Nap. i. 198,
198, 199.
Lond. i. 128,
130.

61.
Advance of
the British to
attack the
French there.

to contend, single-handed, with the forces of Junot, but from the apprehensions which it inspired regarding the sincerity of their allies' professions of zeal against the common enemy. Sir Arthur, notwithstanding, continued his advance, and was received every where by the people with rapturous enthusiasm. His route lay by Alcobaca to Caldas, which latter place he reached on the evening of the 15th; Laborde, who commanded a division of five thousand French, which Junot, on the first alarm, had sent down to the coast, retiring as he advanced. A trifling skirmish occurred on the same day at Obidos, in which a few men were killed and wounded on both sides—memorable as the scene where British blood first flowed in the Peninsular war.¹

Meanwhile, Junot despatched orders in all directions to call in his detached columns, and concentrate all his forces for the protection of Lisbon: and Laborde, to give him time to complete his arrangements, resolved to stand firm at ROLIÇA—a little village situated at the southern extremity of a large oblong valley, running nearly north and south in the bosom of the Monte Junta, in the centre of which the little village and Moorish tower of Obidos are situated. His force, five thousand strong, including five hundred horse and five guns, was stationed on a small elevated plateau in front of Roliça, at the upper end of the valley; and the hills on either side which shut it in were occupied by detachments, who, from amidst the rocky thickets and close underwood of myrtles and gum-cistus with which they were covered, threatened to keep up a heavy fire on the assailants. Sir Arthur divided his force into three columns; the right, consisting of the Portuguese infantry, and fifty horse under Colonel Trant, was directed to turn the mountains in the rear; while the centre, under Sir Arthur in person, attacked the plateau in front; and the left, under General Ferguson, was ordered to ascend the hills abreast of Obidos, and menace the French right by turning it in the mountains. As the centre advanced, preceded by nine guns, the corps on the right and left moved simultaneously forward in the hills, and the aspect of the body in the plain, nine thousand strong,² moving majestically forward at a slow pace, in the finest order,

² Gurw. iv.
81, 84. Thib.
174, 180.
Foy, iv. 304,
315. Lond.
i. 130, 137.

and constantly closing again, after the array had been broken by trees or houses in the line of its advance, strongly impressed the French soldiers, most of whom, like the British, were that day to make their first essay in real warfare against an antagonist worthy of their arms.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

No sooner, however, was Laborde made aware of the risk he ran, if he remained in his present situation, of being outflanked on either side, than he fell swiftly back, in admirable order, and took up a second position much stronger than the former, in a little plain projecting into the valley higher up in the gorge of the pass, and shut in by close rocky thickets on either side. Thither he was rapidly pursued by the British—the right, centre, and left still moving in the same order. Never in the whole progress of the Peninsular campaigns did war appear in a more picturesque and animating form than in the first engagement of the British soldiers. The loud shouts of the advancing columns, re-echoed by the surrounding hills and answered by as confident cheers from the enemy; the sharp rattle of the musketry among the woods, which marked the advance of the assailants as they drove before them the French light troops; the curling wreaths of smoke which rose above the foliage, and were wafted by the morning air up the sides of the mountains, amidst the rays of a resplendent sun, formed a scene which resembled rather the mimic warfare of the opera stage, than the opening of the most desperate and sanguinary strife recorded in modern times. Such was the impetuosity of the attack, that the leading troops of the centre column, particularly the 29th regiment, forced their way through the gorge, and alone sustained the brunt of the enemy's fire before any of their comrades could come up to their assistance. But the severity of the concentric discharges, not merely from the line in front, but from the woods on either flank, was so great, that this gallant regiment, on first emerging into the little plain, wavered and broke, and their noble colonel, Lake, as he waved his hat to lead them back to the charge, was killed.¹

62.
Combat of
Roliça.

¹ Thieb.
Camp. de
Portugal,
173, 178.
Gurw. iv.
81, 84.
Lond. i. 130,
137.

At that critical moment, however, the 5th and 9th came up, the 29th rallied, and the whole rushed for-

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

63.
Victory of
the British.

ward with irresistible impetuosity upon the enemy. The French were obliged to give ground; the position was carried before it was menaced by the flank columns getting into its rear. Even then the enemy retired slowly and in compact order, keeping up a continued fire from the rearguard, and exhibiting, equally with the advance of the assailants, the finest specimen of discipline and steadiness amidst all the confusion incident to a retreat over broken ground and through entangled thickets. In this brilliant affair the British lost five hundred men killed and wounded; the French six hundred, and three pieces of cannon: and as the former, though nearly triple the enemy upon the whole, were necessarily, from the narrow and rugged character of the ground, inferior, in the first instance at least, at all the points of attack, it was hard to say to which of these two gallant nations the palm of courage and skill in this their first encounter in the Peninsula was to be awarded.* “*Cædes prope par utrinque fuit. . . . Hoc principium simul omenque belli, ut summa rerum prosperum eventum, ita haud sane incruentam ancipitisque certaminis victoriam Romanis portendit.*”†

1 Foy, iv.
304, 315.
Thieb. 174,
172. Gurw.
iv. 81, 84.
Nap. i. 202,
205. Lond.
i. 130, 137.

64.
The British
advance to
Vimeira.

On the following morning orders were, in the first instance, issued for the continuance of the pursuit; and it was universally believed in the army that the enemy would be pursued, at the point of the bayonet, to the Rock of Lisbon. But at noon accounts arrived at headquarters of the arrival of Generals Anstruther and Ack-

* In this, as in all the other actions of the war, the estimate of the numbers engaged is taken from a medium of the accounts on both sides; keeping in view the credit due to the different narratives, and the maxim *testimonia ponderanda sunt potius quam numeranda*. In this affair Sir Arthur estimates the French at 6000 men, Thiebault at 1900, Foy at 2500, Toreno at 5000, Thibaudeau at 3500.—See THIEB. 179; GURW. iv. 81; FOY, iv. 314; TOR. ii. 46; THIB. vi. 464. With the utmost wish to maintain an impartial view, and the greatest anxiety to avoid the influence of undue national partiality, it is impossible to study the French accounts of the actions in the Peninsular war, and particularly the numbers engaged and lost on the opposite sides, without feeling as great distrust of the fidelity of their facts, as admiration for the brilliancy of their descriptions and the talent of their observations; and arriving at the conclusion, that the two rival races of modern Europe have here, as elsewhere, preserved their never-failing characteristics; and that, if the palm for the eagle glance and the scientific reflection is frequently to be awarded to the writers of the Celtic, the credit to honest and trustworthy narrative is in general due to the historians of the Gothic race.

† “The loss was nearly equal on both sides. This first and portentous engagement in the war presaged ultimate success, but was not less ominous of the desperate and sanguinary strife by which it was to be attained.”—LIVY, book xxi. c. 29.

land, with their respective brigades from England, off the coast ; and, at the same time, that Junot had marched with all his disposable force out of Lisbon to bring matters to the issue of a decisive battle. Orders were, therefore, given to suspend the pursuit, and the line of march was directed by Lourinha to VIMEIRA, where headquarters were established on the 19th, in order to be near the sea-coast to take advantage of the reinforcements which were at hand. On the other hand, Junot, having by great exertion collected all his disposable force and formed a junction at Torres Vedras with the retiring division of Laborde, found himself at the head of only fourteen thousand men—including, however, twelve hundred horse and six-and-twenty pieces of cannon: so heavily had the necessity of occupying many different points in a hostile country weighed upon and divided the twenty-five thousand which still remained at his disposal. On the 19th, General Anstruther's brigade was landed, and on the 20th General Ackland's; and these reinforcements raised the English army to sixteen thousand fighting men, besides Trant's Portuguese and two regiments which were with Sir Charles Cotton off the Tagus. It had, however, only eighteen guns and a hundred and eighty horse British, and two hundred Portuguese horse ; so that the superiority of infantry was nearly counterbalanced by the advantage of the enemy in the other arms of war.¹

Accurately informed of the nature of the country through which he was to advance, Sir Arthur proposed, on the 21st, to turn the strong position of Torres Vedras and gain Mafra with a powerful advanced guard ; while the main body was to move forward and seize the adjoining heights, so as to intercept the French line of retreat by Montachique to Lisbon. But Sir Harry Burrard, Sir Arthur's superior in command, who had now arrived off the coast, forbade any such hazardous operation, as endangering unnecessarily part of the army, when the force already in hand, and still more the powerful reinforcement approaching under Sir John Moore, rendered ultimate success a matter of certainty without incurring any such risk. The troops, therefore, were concentrated at Vimeira, and every arrangement made for a decisive battle on the morrow ;² while Junot, having mustered

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

Aug. 19.

Aug. 20.

¹ Gurw. iv.
89, 93.
Lond. i. 137.
Foy, iv. 319.
320. Thieb.
183, 190.

65.
Sir A. Wellesley's plans are overruled by Sir H. Burrard.

² Gurw. iv.
89, 93. Sir A. Wellesley's Evid.
Ibid. iv. 181.
Lond. i. 137, 142. Nap. i. 207, 209.
Foy, iv. 319, 323. Thieb. 183, 195.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

66.
Description
of the field of
battle of
Vimeira.

Aug. 20.
1 Nap. i.
208, 212.
Thieb. 192.
Foy, 324.
Gurw. iv. 93,
94.

every man he could collect at Torres Vedras, set out soon after nightfall, and advanced, through tedious and difficult defiles, to within a league and a half of the British outposts, where he arrived by seven o'clock on the following morning.*

The ground occupied by the British in front of Vimeira, though not clearly defined as a military position, was yet of considerable strength. The village of that name stands in a beautiful valley, running in a north-westerly direction from the interior towards the Atlantic, with the clear stream of the Maceira glittering over a pebbly bottom in its bosom, at the distance of about three miles from the sea. Hills rise on either side, especially on the northern, where a range of abrupt heights overhang the little plain. Over the summit of these runs the great road from Lisbon, through the hamlets of Fontaneil and Ventoza to Lourinha; while on the south-east is a kind of high table-land, covered in the ravines with myrtle, in the open part bare, over which the approach from Torres Vedras passes. A still loftier mass of heights overlooks these in the rear, and lies between them and the sea.¹ On this rugged ground the British army

* The road by which Sir Arthur proposed to have advanced from Vimeira to Mafra was near the sea-coast; that by which Junot actually came up from Torres Vedras to Vimeira was farther in the interior, but nearly parallel to the former. If, therefore, the design of the English general had been followed out, it would have brought the two armies into a position similar to that of the French and Prussians at Jena; they would have mutually turned and crossed each other in their march, and when they came to blows, Junot would have fought with his back to Oporto and his face to Lisbon, and Wellington with his back to Lisbon and his face to Oporto. But there would have been this essential distinction between the situation of the two armies, after having thus mutually passed each other—that Junot, cut off from all his reserves and supplies at Lisbon, would have been driven, in case of disaster, to a ruinous retreat through the insurgent and hostile mountains of the north of Portugal; whereas Wellington, backed by the sea, and having his fleet, containing powerful reinforcements, to fall back upon, would have fought in a comparatively advantageous position. There can be little doubt that, in these circumstances, defeat to Junot would have been attended with decisive consequences, and that Wellington was pursuing the plan of an able commander in throwing himself in this manner upon his enemy's line of communication without compromising his own; the great object and most decisive stroke which can be dealt out in war. At the same time it is not surprising that Sir Harry Burrard, who came in on the broadside of the affair, and could not be supposed to appreciate, so clearly as the commander actually engaged, the vital importance of not delaying an hour the proposed night-march between the sea and the hills, should have declined to plunge at once into so perilous an operation. His real error consisted in interfering at all with an important and delicate military operation, at a time when it was on the eve of execution by an able and experienced general; and the chief fault lay with the government in subjecting the army, at such a critical time, to the successive command of three different generals, who could not be supposed properly to enter into, or thoroughly understand, the operations in the course of execution at the time when they successively assumed the direction.

lay in bivouac on the night of the 20th, the village of Vimeira being occupied by a strong detachment, and a few pickets stationed on the heights towards Torres Vedras, to give warning of the arrival of the enemy.

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

The first information of their approach was obtained at midnight, when a horseman in haste rode up to Sir Arthur with the account that Junot's whole army, said to be twenty thousand strong, was approaching. Shortly before sunrise a cloud of dust was seen to arise in the direction of the road leading from Torres Vedras to Lourinha—column after column were soon after discerned, through the morning dawn, to cross the sky-line of the opposite eminences, and it was evident that the French were bearing down in great force on the British left. After they descended from the heights on the opposite side, however, the direction of their march could no longer be distinctly traced, and the advanced guards were upon the English videttes almost as soon as they were perceived. But Sir Arthur, concluding from the line of the road on which they were moving, that the left was the principal object of attack, had meanwhile ordered four brigades successively to cross the valley from the heights on the south to those on the north of the stream, and before the action began that part of the line was secure. Observing the rapid concentration of troops on the English left, the French accumulated their forces on their own right. General Laborde commanded a column, six thousand strong, which advanced against the centre; while Brennier, with his division of five thousand, moved against the left of the British; and the reserve under Kellerman, with the cavalry led by Margaron, in all about three thousand men, was ready to support any point where their aid might be required. Generals Ferguson, Nightingale, and Bower commanded the English left. Ackland united the left to the centre, which, strongly grouped together in the valley in front of Vimeira, was formed of the brigades of Anstruther and Fane; while, on the right, Hill's brigade, in a massy column, rested on the summit of the heights which formed the southern boundary of the valley.¹

67.
Positions
taken up by
the two
armies.

¹ Lond. i.
140, 142.
Nap. i. 208.
212. Foy.
iv. 324, 333.
Thieb. 192.
194. Gurw.
iv. 93, 94.

The action began with the head of Laborde's column, which, advancing with the utmost impetuosity against

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

68.

Battle of
Vimeira.
Aug. 21.

the British centre, first came in contact with the 50th regiment. Its light troops were driven in with great vigour, and the French mounted the hill to the north-east of Vimeira with loud cries and all the confidence of victory; but when they reached the summit, they were shattered by a well-directed fire from the artillery, disposed along the front of the English line on the edge of the steep; and their troops were arrested by the effect of the shrapnell shells, then first used against them, which, after striking down by a point-blank discharge whole files of soldiers in front, exploded with all the devastation of bombs in the rear. While yet breathless with their ascent, they received a discharge within pistol-shot from the 50th, and were immediately charged with the bayonet with such vigour, that ere the rush took place they broke and fled.* At the same time Fane's brigade repulsed, with equal success, an attack on the village of Vimeira in the centre, and, after a desperate contest, seven pieces of cannon were taken in that quarter; while the few horsemen with the army who were there stationed broke forth among the retreating lines with great execution. But pursuing their advantage too far, they were assailed when in disorder, by the superior troops of the French cavalry, and almost cut to pieces.¹

While these successes were achieved in the centre, a most severe conflict was going on in the hills to the left,

* Colonel Walker, of the 50th regiment, finding his battalion, which had only 700 bayonets in the field, unable, by a direct resistance in front, to withstand the assault of above 2000 men in column, whom Labordet led on, most skillfully drew it up obliquely to their advance, with the left, against which they were directed, thrown back. The effect of this was to expose the flank as well as front of the French column to the British fire, almost every shot of which told on their crowded ranks, while a small number only could return the discharge, and the numerous ranks in rear were perfectly useless. When the command to charge was given, the British regiment in line came down in compact order on the French column, partly in front and partly in flank, and in the attempt to deploy and form line to withstand the levelled steel, they almost unavoidably broke and fled. This method of resisting the French attack in column was very frequently afterwards employed by Wellington, and always with the same success. It can hardly fail of proving successful, if the part of the line menaced by the head of the column can be relied on to withstand the shock till the fire of the other parts on the flank of the column has produced the desired effect; but unless this is the case the column will break the line, and, deploying against the oblique line, now itself taken in flank, soon drive it off the field. Of all the European troops the British are the only ones by whom this hazardous, but, if successful, decisive mode of resisting the attack in column was habitually practised. General Loison, who witnessed this able movement, desired, after the Convention of Cintra, to be introduced to Colonel Walker, and, with true military frankness, congratulated him on the steadiness and talent with which he had, with a battalion in line, withstood the formidable attack of the French column.—See Scott's *Napoleon*, vi. 235.

¹ Gurw. iv.
93, 95.
Thieb. 195.
Foy, ii. 230.

where the road to Lourinha ascends the steep heights to the north of Vimeira. Brennier and Solignac commanded in that quarter; and as Junot perceived that their attack did not at once prove successful, they were supported in the end by the whole reserve of infantry under Kellerman. The French, under Solignac, preceded by a cloud of light troops, came on with the utmost impetuosity, and first encountered Ferguson's brigade on the summit of the ridge. Several terrible discharges of musketry were exchanged between these dauntless antagonists with extraordinary execution on both sides, as the fire-arms, almost within pistol-shot, told with murderous effect on the dense array of either line. At length, however, the three English regiments which had hitherto singly maintained the combat, (the 40th, 56th, and 71st,) being supported by three others, levelled their bayonets, and rushing forward with irresistible impetuosity, drove the French line headlong down the steep, with the loss of all their artillery. So dreadful was the execution by the bayonet on this occasion, that the whole front line of one of the French regiments went down like grass before the scythe, and three hundred men lay dead as they had stood in their ranks.¹

Brennier's brigade, however, still remained, as well as the reserve under Kellerman—the flower of the French army—and with these choice troops Junot made a gallant attempt to regain the day. Forming his men under the cover of the rocks and woods which concealed them from the enemy, Brennier, with his columns in admirable order, came suddenly upon the victorious British as they were lying on the ground, in loose array in the valley, reposing after their success, and, suddenly charging, drove them back, and retook the guns. But his triumph was only momentary. The surprised troops rallied upon the heights in their rear, to which they had been driven, and, facing about, poured in a destructive volley upon their pursuers; and immediately charging back again with a loud shout, not only again captured the artillery, but made Brennier himself prisoner, and drove the enemy a second time in utter confusion down the hill. So complete was the rout, that Solignac's brigade was driven off the ground in a different direction from Brennier's; the

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

1. *Confusion and
conflict on
the left.*

¹ Sir A. Wel-
lesley's
Despatch.
Gurw. iv. 93,
95. Thieb.
195, 201.
Foy, ii. 330,
339. Jom.
iii. 71, 72.

70.
Defeat of the
French.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Sir A. Wel-
lesley's De-
spatches.
Gurw. iv. 93,
96. Nap. i.
212, 216.
Lond. i. 142,
144. Foy, iv.
330, 339.
Thieb. 195,
201. Journ.
iii. 71, 72.
Scott, vi.
234, 235.

former general was desperately wounded, and his troops would all have been made prisoners had not an unexpected order from Sir Harry Burrard obliged Ferguson to halt in the midst of his success. The broken French upon this rallied and reunited, and the whole fell back to the heights on the opposite side of the valley, considerably to the north of the ground from which they had commenced their attack in the morning—leaving in the hands of the victors thirteen pieces of cannon, a large quantity of ammunition, and four hundred prisoners, besides two thousand who had fallen on the field. The English had to lament the loss of nearly eight hundred men in killed and wounded.¹

71.
Sir A. Wel-
lesley pro-
poses to
follow up the
victory.

Like the Allied sovereigns at Austerlitz, Junot had made his attack by a flank-march directed in échelon athwart the front, against the left of the British in position; and his disaster, like theirs, was in a great measure owing to that cause, which brought his different columns not simultaneously, but at successive periods into action. Sir Arthur Wellesley had as decisive success in his power as Napoleon at the close of the day; for not only had the three brigades under Hill on the right, and the Portuguese, never fired a shot, but two other brigades had suffered very little. The entire army was in excellent order and the most enthusiastic spirits; the shouts of victory, the triumphant clang of trumpets, was heard along their whole line; and from the direction which the broken French had taken after their defeat, they were entirely cut off from the retreat to Lisbon. On the other hand, the British, who had repulsed their oblique attack, and driven them off in a north-easterly direction, were masters of the great road by Torres Vedras to the capital. This situation of things promised the greatest results to immediate activity. Sir Arthur was fully aware of the vast advantages thus placed within his grasp, and prepared, by immediate and decisive operations, instantly to turn them to the best account. He proposed with the five brigades on the left, about nine thousand men, and the Portuguese, five thousand more, to follow up his success against the retreating columns of the enemy, now blended together in great confusion on the opposite heights, and drive them as far as possible

back in a north-easterly direction over the Sierra da Baragueda, away from the capital; while the brigades of Hill, Anstruther, and Fane, six thousand strong, should make straight for the defile of Torres Vedras, which lay open to the south, and thence push on to Montachique, and cut off all retreat by the French to Lisbon. Considering that Junot had lost two-thirds of his artillery, and great part of his reserve park of ammunition, there can be no doubt that this operation would have proved successful, and that not only would Lisbon have fallen an easy prey to the victors, but Junot himself, driven to an eccentric and disastrous retreat through an insurgent and mountainous country almost destitute of roads, would have been too happy to find shelter under the cannon of Almeida with half his forces.¹

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ Gur. iv. 99,
and Evi-
dence, iv.
207. Lord
Burghersh's
Evidence, Ib.
iv. 214.
Lond. i. 145,
146.

Orders to that effect were already given, and the army was preparing to execute them, when the assumption of the command by Sir Harry Burrard at once arrested the career of victory. That officer, who had arrived on the field with his staff early in the day, had with generous forbearance declined to take the command from Sir Arthur during the battle; but after it was over, considering the responsibility of ulterior operations as resting on himself, he gave orders to halt at all points, and remain in position at Vimeira till the expected reinforcements under Sir John Moore joined the army. Sir Arthur, in the strongest terms and with military frankness, represented to his superior general, on the field of battle, the inestimable importance of instantly following up the beaten enemy, driving him still further to the north-east, and interposing between his disordered columns and the strong defiles of Torres Vedras, the real gates of the capital. But all was in vain. Sir Harry Burrard, though a respectable and gallant veteran, had none of the vigour or daring requisite for decisive success; he belonged to the old school, by whom one battle was considered sufficient work for one week, and deemed it imprudent, when the artillery-horses were fatigued, and the cavalry destroyed, to hazard any thing by a further advance, the more especially as ultimate success without any risk was certainly to be looked for upon the arrival of Sir John

72.
But is pre-
vented by
Sir Harry
Burrard.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Sir A. Wellesley's Despatches. Gurw. iv. 99, and Evid. Ibid. iv. 207, 208. Lord Burghersh's Evidence, Ibid. iv. 214. Lond. i. 145, 146. Nap. i. 216, 217.

Moore's division. He persisted, accordingly, in his resolution not to move from his ground: the precious moments were lost, never to be regained; the disordered French, seeing with astonishment that they were not pursued, re-formed their ranks. Junot that very night, by a forced and circuitous march, regained the defiles of Torres Vedras, and secured his retreat to the capital; while Sir Arthur, seeing the opportunity was lost, and concealing the bitterness of his disappointment under an affected gaiety, said to the officers of his staff, "Gentlemen, nothing now remains to us but to go and shoot red-legged partridges."¹*

73.
An armistice is concluded.

Sir Harry Burrard's tenure of the supreme direction of affairs was of short duration. Early on the morning of the 22d, Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived from Gibraltar, and immediately landed and assumed the command; so that within thirty hours a pitched battle had been fought, a decisive operation rejected, and three successive commanders called to the direction of the army. After consulting with Sir Arthur and Sir Harry, and getting the best information he could, he resolved to advance on the 23d against Junot, now in position at Torres Vedras, and orders to that effect had already been issued, when information was brought that a French flag of truce had reached the outposts. It proved to be General Kellerman, with a proposal from Junot for a suspension of arms, with a view to the evacuation of Portugal.²

Aug. 23.

² Gurw. iv. 104. Nap. i. 220. Foy, iv. 340.

74.
Reasons which led to an armistice on both sides.

In truth, the situation of Junot since the battle of Vimeira had been such, that he had no longer any alternative to adopt. Early on the morning of the 22d, a council of war was held at Torres Vedras; and the proverb almost invariably holds good, that such a council never fights. The French generals were aware that a powerful reinforcement, under Sir John Moore, was on the eve of landing; that a city containing three hundred thousand agitated and hostile citizens was in the rear;

* Lord Burghersh, in his evidence before the court of inquiry, declared,—“I recollect, that on the evening of 21st August, Sir Arthur Wellesley urged Sir H. Burrard to advance, giving as a reason that his right was some miles nearer to Torres Vedras than the enemy; that he had four brigades that had not been engaged; that Torres Vedras was the pass by which the enemy must retire to Lisbon, and that, in his opinion, by that movement no part of the French army could reach Lisbon.”—*Evidence, Court of Inquiry*: Gurwood, iv. 214.

that the forts and points of defence which it contained were hardly tenable against an army of thirty thousand English troops; and that to attempt a retreat through Portugal, intersected as it was by mountain torrents and almost inaccessible ridges, in the face of an insurgent population, and pursued by a victorious army, could not fail to be attended with the greatest disasters. In these circumstances, it was unanimously agreed that enough had been done for the honour of the imperial arms, and that to endeavour to obtain by negotiation a convention which might restore the army to the French soil, and ultimately to renewed operations in the north of Spain, was the most prudent course which could be adopted. General Kellerman was selected for this delicate mission, and it could not have been intrusted to abler or more skilful hands. Enjoying a European reputation, not less from the glory of his father, the hero of Valmy,¹ than his own invaluable achievements on the field of Marengo,² he was at the same time possessed of all the tact and finesse in which the French diplomatists excel all those of Europe, with the exception of those of Russia.³

Perceiving from some hints dropt in conversation by the English general, Sir Hew Dalrymple, and his brother officers, who were not aware that he understood their language, that they were far from possessing the confidence of Sir Arthur Wellesley in the results to be expected from immediate and decisive operations, he began by representing, in the most favourable colours, the strength of the French army and the magnitude of its resources, especially from the aid of the sailors and artillery of the Russian fleet, as well as the resolution of its commander, whom he described as determined to bury himself under the ruins of Lisbon rather than submit to any conditions derogatory to the honour of the imperial arms. Having thus effected his object of producing an impression as to the protracted and doubtful nature of the contest which awaited them if hostilities were persisted in, he gradually opened the real object of his mission, which was the conclusion of an armistice preparatory to a convention for the evacuation of Portugal. The terms proposed were, that the French army

CHAP.

LIV.

1808.

¹ Ante, c. x. § 27.
² Ante, c. xxxi. § 93.
³ Nap. i. 220, 225. Gurw. iv. 105, 116. Thieb. 204. 206. Foy, iv. 344.

75.
 Convention of Cintra.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

Aug. 23.

¹ Nap. i. 220,
£29. Gurw.
iv. 105, 116.
117. Foy, iv.
343, 345.
Lond. i. 152,
160. Thieb.
204, 209.

76.
Senseless
clamour in
England on
the subject,
leads to a
Court of In-
quiry. Its
result.

should not be considered as prisoners of war, but be sent back to France by sea, with their artillery, arms, and baggage; that their partisans in the country should not be disquieted on account of their political opinions, but, so far as they desired it, be permitted to withdraw with their effects; and, that the Russian fleet should remain in Lisbon as in a neutral harbour. The two first conditions were acceded to without any difficulty by all the English generals; but Sir Arthur Wellesley strenuously opposed the last, and it was at last agreed to refer it to the decision of Sir Charles Cotton, who positively refused to agree to it. Foiled in this attempt to extricate the Russian fleet from their awkward situation, the French general was obliged to leave them to their fate, and a separate convention was some days afterwards concluded with Admiral Siniavin, the Russian commander, in virtue of which the whole fleet was to be conducted to England and retained in deposit till the conclusion of a general peace, and the officers and crews to be transported to Russia at the expense of the British government, without any restriction as to their future service.¹*

Posterity will scarcely be able to credit the universal burst of indignation with which this convention was received, both in the Peninsular nations and the British islands. Totally incapable of appreciating the real importance of the acquisition of Portugal at one blow on the future progress of the war, the inhabitants of all these countries united in condemning a treaty which was thought to step between them and the glory which they

* The Convention of Cintra excited such a clamour at the time, both in the British and Peninsular nations, that a short summary of its leading provisions is indispensable. It was provided that the French should evacuate the forts of Lisbon and whole kingdom of Portugal, and be conveyed to France, with their artillery and sixty rounds of ammunition to each gun, and with liberty to serve again; all other artillery, arms, and ammunition, to be delivered up to the British army and navy; the French army to carry with them all their equipments, the cavalry their horses, and the individuals their property; the sick and wounded to be intrusted to the care of the British government, and returned to France when convalescent: the fortresses of Elvas, Almeida, Peniche, and Palmela to be delivered up as soon as British detachments can be sent forward to take possession of them; all subjects of France to be protected who are domiciliated in Portugal; all their property of every description to be guaranteed to the French citizens in Portugal; no inhabitants of that country to be disquieted on account of their political conduct or opinions; the Spanish troops in the custody of the French armies to be liberated. By the supplementary convention in regard to the Russian fleet, it was stipulated that it should be conveyed to Great Britain, to remain in deposit with all its stores till six months after the conclusion of a general peace: and the officers and men meanwhile to be returned to Russia, without any restriction as to their future service.—See GURWOOD, iv. 113, 117.

had earned, or the vengeance which was their due. The Portuguese, though they had been in no hurry to confront the invader in the field, and were strangers to the glories of Roliça and Vimeira, were yet loud in their complaints of the capitulation which had been granted; and bitterly inveighed against the clauses which, under the specious veil of protecting private property, in effect gave the public robbers the means of securely carrying off the stores of private and ecclesiastical plunder which they had amassed. The Spaniards re-echoed the same sentiments, and with some appearance of reason; contrasted the surrender of Dupont's corps at Baylen with the unhappy convention, which tended only to remove the French army from a situation where it was detached from the remainder of the imperial forces, and ran the most imminent hazard of being made prisoners of war, to one where it might be more advantageously and securely employed in forming the right wing of the army with which the invasion of the Peninsula was again to be attempted. Roused to the very highest pitch of enthusiasm by the early and decisive successes which had attended their arms—panting for their full share of the glories which had been won—and nothing doubting that an unconditional surrender would immediately follow, and that they should soon see a marshal of France and twenty thousand men arrive as prisoners of war at Spithead, the British people abandoned themselves to unbounded vexation when the capitulation was announced which was to convey them, without that last disgrace being incurred, to swell the invader's ranks at Rochfort and L'Orient.¹

In vain were the Park and Tower guns fired on this as on other triumphs of our arms; the public voice refused to join in the acclamations; the press, both in the metropolis and the provinces, loudly condemned the convention as more disgraceful than even those of the Helder and Closter-seven, where the British troops had been constrained to sue for terms of accommodation. Many of the public journals refused to stain their pages by the obnoxious articles, others appeared with their columns in mourning, as in a season of national calamity; public meetings were held in most parts of England, to

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

¹ South. ii.
272, 274.
Tor. ii. 57.
58. Gurw. iv.
235, 239.

77.
A court of
inquiry is
held, and its
results.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

express the general indignation, and call for the punishment of the guilty parties; and to such a length did the outcry proceed, that it was deemed indispensable by government to consent to a court of inquiry. Such a court was accordingly appointed, consisting of highly respectable, though somewhat antiquated officers, who, after a full investigation, arrived at the conclusion that, considering the extraordinary manner in which three successive commanders had been invested with the direction of the army after the battle of Vimeira, it was not surprising that that victory had not been more vigorously followed up; that unquestionable zeal and firmness had been exhibited by all the three generals; and that, in the whole circumstances of the case, no further proceedings were necessary. The general odium attached to Sir Hew Dalrymple, as the senior officer in command at the time the convention was signed; though it was evident that the chief fault in the case, if there was fault at all, lay with Sir Harry Burrard as the commander-in-chief when the decisive march to Torres Vedras was declined. Such was the universal discontent, that neither of these two generals, notwithstanding the acquittal of the court-martial, were again employed in any considerable command in the British army; and it required all the family influence and early celebrity of the hero of Assaye and Vimeira to save the future conqueror of Napoleon from being cut short on the threshold of his career, for no fault whatever of his own, by the very people upon whom he had conferred an inestimable benefit.¹*

¹ Court of Inquiry, Gurw. iv. 235, 239. South. ii. 272, 276. Lond. i. 157, 165. Tor. ii. 57, 58.

78.
Its expedi-
ence at that
juncture.

The English people in general arrive in the end at more sober and rational opinions on political subjects than any other of whom history has preserved a record. But they are prone, in the first instance, in a most extraordinary degree, to common delusions or frenzies, which almost amount to national insanity. The cruel injustice with which they persecuted Sir Robert Calder for having gained a victory, perhaps the most momentous in its ultimate consequences, and most vital to the safety of the

* At the meeting of parliament, the public thanks of both Houses were voted to Sir Arthur Wellesley for the battle of Vimeira. But he had a narrow escape, notwithstanding all his glory and the influence of his brother, Marquis Wellesley, from the obloquy consequent on the Convention of Cintra.—See GURWOOD, iv. 239, 241.

country of any recorded in the British annals,¹ is an instance of such delusion ; the universal and senseless clamour raised about the Convention of Cintra, an example of such frenzy. There cannot be a doubt, not only of its expedience at the juncture when it was concluded, but of its having been the means of acquiring the basis on which the whole future successes of the British arms were rested. Having missed, perhaps through an excess of caution, the opportunity of following up, according to Sir Arthur Wellesley's advice, the brilliant success of Vimeira on the evening of the battle, nothing remained but to close with the highly advantageous offer, which at once liberated Portugal from its oppressors, and secured the best possible base for future operations. The sea, sterile and unproductive if in the rear of the forces of any other power, is the source of strength and vigour to the British armies ; to them every tide is fraught with plenty, every wind wafts the sinews of war on its gales. Thenceforward Lisbon became the great *place d'armes* to the English army, the stronghold of defence in periods of disaster, the reservoir from whence all the muniments of war were drawn in prosperous times. To have missed the opportunity of at once, and in the outset of the campaign, acquiring such a position, for the vain glory of possibly compelling a French corps and marshal, after a bloody siege of several months' duration, to lay down their arms in Lisbon, Elvas, or Almeida, would have been sacrificing the solid advantages of war for its empty honours. The restoration of twenty thousand defeated and dispirited soldiers to the standards of the enemy, was a matter of little consequence to a sovereign who had seven hundred thousand disciplined men at his command ; the loss of a whole kingdom, of a chain of strong fortresses, of an admirable harbour, of ten sail of the line to his ally, of the *prestige* of victory to ² Thieb. 472. himself, was a calamity of a very different description.²

Napoleon showed clearly in what light he viewed the acquisition of such advantages to the French arms, when, in the outset of his career, he stipulated only, in return for his glorious successes in the Maritime Alps, the cession of the Piedmontese fortresses from the cabinet of Turin ; ³ Ante, c. xx. § 67. and when, after the triumph of Marengo, he at once

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Ante, c.
xxxix. § 78.

79.

Napoleon's
views on that
subject.

³ Ante, c. xx.
§ 67.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Ante, c.
xxvi. § 97.² Thieb. 472.
D'Abr. xii.
64, 102.

allowed the Austrian army, cut off from the Hereditary States and thrown back on Genoa, to retire unmolested to the Mincio, provided only they ceded Alexandria, Tortona, and the other strongholds in the west of Lombardy, as the reward of victory.¹ On the present occasion he felt quite as strongly the vast importance of the fortified basis for future operations, so advantageously situated on the edge of the sea, and on the flank of the Peninsular plains, which had thus, in the very outset of their career, been wrested from him by the British arms: had the advantage been gained by himself, he would have made Europe ring from side to side with the triumph which had been achieved. As it was, he manifested the utmost displeasure at the generals who were engaged in the Convention of Cintra; and Junot, in particular, never afterwards regained his confidence or esteem. "I was about," said he, "to send Junot to a council of war; but happily the English got the start of me by sending their generals to one, and thus saved me from the pain of punishing an old friend."²*

Many causes conspired to make the execution of the Convention of Cintra a matter of great difficulty to all the contracting parties. The French troops, from the time it was concluded, were constantly kept together in

* "He," says the Duchess of Abrantes, "to whom the whole life of Junot was devoted, alone viewed in a false light the Convention of Cintra. Every thing which was not a triumph he regarded as a defeat; and, like Augustus, he never ceased to demand his legions from all those who had not succeeded in conducting his young conscripts, hardly emerged from boyhood, to victory."—D'ABRANTES. xii. 64, 102.

The Duke of Wellington's opinion on the expedience of the Convention of Cintra was equally clearly expressed. "If we had not negotiated," said he, "we could not have advanced before the 30th, as Sir John Moore's corps was not ready till that day. The French would by that time have fortified their positions near Lisbon, which, it is probable, we could not have been in a situation to attack till the end of the first week in September. Then, taking the chance of the bad weather depriving us of the communication with the fleet of transports and victuallers, and delaying and rendering more difficult and precarious our land operations, which after all could not have been effectual to cut off the retreat of the French across the Tagus into Alentejo, I was clearly of opinion, *that the best thing to do was to consent to a convention, and allow them to evacuate Portugal.* The details of the convention, and the agreement to suspend hostilities, is a different matter; to both of them I have very serious objections. I do not know what Sir Hew Dalrymple proposes to do, or is instructed to do; but if I were in his situation I would be in Madrid with 20,000 men in less than a month from this time."—SIR A. WELLESLEY to CHARLES STUART, Esq., 1st September 1808; GURWOOD, iv. 121. Here is the clearest evidence of the advantageous results of obtaining so early in the campaign the great fortified base of Portugal for the British operations. Sir Arthur in a month proposed to have had twenty thousand men in Madrid! He is a bold man, who, on such a subject, dissents from the concurring opinion of Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington.

masses, encamped on the heights and forts, with cannon directed down the principal streets which led to their bivouacs. Notwithstanding these formidable preparations, and the proximity of the British forces, who, early in September, approached close to Lisbon, it was found to be impossible to prevent the indignation of the populace from finding vent in detached acts of aggression. Crowds of infuriated peasants incessantly thronged into the city, decorated with ribbons, vociferating shouts of triumph, and bearing on their hats the favourite motto, "Death to the French!" At night the discharge of fire-arms or explosion of petards were heard on all sides, occasioned by skirmishes between the enraged populace and the French advanced posts. Loison, whose unnecessary cruelty had rendered him in an especial manner the object of universal hatred, was menaced by a serious attack: while other generals, especially Travot, who had executed their orders with humanity, were not only unmolested, but traversed the streets alone in perfect safety: a fact, as Colonel Napier justly observes, extremely honourable to the Portuguese, and conclusive as to the misconduct of the obnoxious officers.¹

But these difficulties, great as they were, soon sank into insignificance when compared with those which arose from the discoveries made, in the course of the preparations for the embarkation, of the extent to which public and private plunder had been carried by the French army. Sir John Hope, who had been appointed governor of Lisbon, took possession of the castle of Belem on the 10th September, and by his firm and vigorous conduct soon reduced the unruly multitude to some degree of order. But the complaints which daily arose as to the enormous quantity of plunder which the French were about to carry off under pretence of its being their private property, continually increased, and became the occasion of much more serious embarrassment. The museum, the treasury, the public libraries, the church plate, the arsenals of the state, equally with the houses of individuals, had been indiscriminately ransacked; most of the valuable articles left in the royal palace by the flying Regent were packed up and ready for embarkation. All the money in the public offices was laid hold off; even the sums lying

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

80.

Disgraceful
revelations
which are
made at Lis-
bon of the
plunder by all
ranks in the
French army.
Sept. 5.

¹ Nap. i. 23L.
Nevis, ii.
240. Thieb.
239.

81.

Enormous
extent of the
plunder the
French super-
ior officers
endeavoured
to carry off.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

in the *Deposito Publico*, a bank where they were placed to await the decision of the courts of law on matters of litigation, were appropriated by these insatiable hands. Junot went so far as to demand five vessels to take away his personal effects. Matters at length rose to such a height that the British commanders felt themselves called upon to interfere; and the commissioners to whom the execution of the convention had been intrusted, with much difficulty, and after the most violent altercation, succeeded in putting a stop to the disgraceful spoliation.¹

¹ Nap. i. 232,
234. Nevis, ii.
240, 249.
Foy, iv. 356,
360. Thieb.
239.

82.
Great part of
the plunder
is wrested
from the
French.
Sept. 12.

These high functionaries, General Beresford and Lord Proby, acted with such firmness, that not only was the progress of the plunderers arrested, and much which had been seized from the public offices restored, but a general order was extorted from the French commander, enjoining the immediate restitution of all the property which had been taken from public or private establishments within twenty-four hours. Yet so inveterate was the habit of spoliation in all ranks of the French army, from the highest to the lowest, that within a few hours after this order was issued, Colonel Delambis, Junot's chief aide-camp, carried off the Prince Regent's horses; a valuable collection of private pictures was seized on by Junot himself; and two carriages belonging to the Duke of Sussex were appropriated, which were only got back by the threat of detaining the marshal himself as a hostage. At length, however, after vehement discussion, and a complete revelation of that extraordinary system of public and private plunder which had been so long and disgracefully the characteristic of the French army, the greater part of this ill-gotten spoil was wrested from the invaders. On the 15th, the first division of the fleet sailed from the Tagus; by the 30th the whole were embarked: shortly after Elvas and Almeida were given up in terms of the capitulation; and before the middle of October not

Sept. 15.
Sept. 30.

² Nap. i. 232, 234. South. i. 240, 249. Nevis, ii. 230, 249. Foy, iv. 356, 364. Thieb. 239. A French soldier remained on the soil of Portugal. Twenty-two thousand men were disembarked on the coasts of France; thirty thousand had been placed, from first to last, by Napoleon under the orders of Junot; the remainder had perished of fatigue, disease, fallen in the field, or voluntarily enlisted in the British army.² The

convention, though loudly disapproved of by the British people, was, on the admission of the French themselves, carried into execution with scrupulous good faith by the government.*

CHAP.
LIV.
1808.

The subordinate arrangements consequent on the decisive events which had in this manner liberated Portugal, were soon concluded. Such was the violence of the groundless clamour which arose in England on the subject of the Convention, that all the generals engaged in it, Sir Hew Dalrymple, Sir Harry Burrard, and Sir Arthur Wellesley, were obliged to return to Great Britain; where, as already mentioned, their conduct in relation to it became the subject of deliberation to a court of inquiry, which, after a long and impartial investigation, returned a report, distinguished by little ability, which, in substance, found that no blame could be attached to any of these officers. Meanwhile the army, deprived in this way for a time of the guidance of the brave leader who had in so glorious a manner led it to victory, was placed under the command of SIR JOHN MOORE,† an officer

83.
The British
troops
are placed
under the
command of
Sir John
Moore.

* "That same public opinion, under the influence of a free constitution, which condemned the Convention of Cintra, enjoined to its government its faithful execution. In so far as depended on the English government, the convention was executed with honourable fidelity."—Foy, iv. 356.

† John Moore was born at Glasgow, on the 13th November 1761. He was the eldest son of Dr John Moore, the author of *Zeluco* and other celebrated works. Young Moore was educated at the public school and university of that city, and was abroad for five years in company with his father, who was travelling tutor to the Duke of Hamilton, by which means he saw much of the world, gained a knowledge of modern languages, and acquired that suavity and elegance of manner for which he was remarkable through life. In 1776, he obtained an ensigncy in the 51st regiment, then lying at Minorca, and soon after a lieutenancy in the 82d, with which he served through all the campaigns of the American war. At the commencement of the Revolutionary contest, he was lieutenant-colonel of his old regiment, the 51st, at the head of which he was employed in 1794 in the reduction of Corsica. Subsequently he was engaged in the reduction of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice, in the West Indies; in which services he distinguished himself so much, that Sir Ralph Abercromby, in his public despatches, characterised his conduct as "the admiration of the whole army." During the rebellion in Ireland, in 1798, he was again called into active service; and the victory gained over the rebels in that year at Wexford, was mainly owing to his talents and arrangements. In 1799 his valour and conduct were again evinced in the expedition to the Helder; in 1801 he led the vanguard which first landed at Aboukir Bay, and rushed with such vigour up the sandhills, and in the decisive battle of 21st March, in which he was wounded, his gallantry and conduct attracted universal notice. For these services he was made a Knight of the Bath; and for some years commanded the army which occupied Sicily, until in 1807 he was sent in command of the expedition to the Baltic, from which he was soon recalled to more glorious, though melancholy destinies, in the Spanish Peninsula. Brave, chivalrous, and high-spirited, no man ever more thoroughly understood the art of war, or more completely acquired the affections while he commanded the respect of his soldiers, and to the improvement of their discipline and increase of their comforts he devoted a large portion of his attention. But though second to none in personal valour, he had not the energy and vigour

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

¹ Nap. i. 247,
248. Lond. i.
179, 180.
Nevis, ii. 264.

whose gallant conduct in Egypt, as well as admirable skill in the training and disciplining of his troops, had already rendered him distinguished among all his brethren in arms. His division had landed and joined the other troops at Lisbon; while another corps, fifteen thousand strong, under the orders of SIR DAVID BAIRD,* whose gallantry and firmness had been conspicuous at the storming of Seringapatam, was assembled in the British islands, and was destined to land at Corunna, descend through Galicia, and co-operate with those which had advanced from Portugal, in the plains of Leon.¹

The two together, it was hoped, would amount to nearly forty thousand men, even after providing, in an adequate manner, for the security of Portugal, and the

necessary to reinstate the military character of England after the early disasters of the Revolutionary war: and was unhappily possessed with a desponding impression as to the capability of this country to withstand the power of France on the Continent, which was very different from the fearless confidence and indomitable tenacity of Clive or Wellington. The heroism he displayed in his last moments, and the romantic circumstances attending his death, have justly secured for him a lasting place in the grateful affections of his country.—See *MOORE'S Life*, 2 vols. by his brother, London, 1832; and *Scottish Biography*, iv. 28, 29.

* David Baird, was the second son of William Baird, Esq., of the Bairds of Newbyth, in East Lothian, an ancient and respectable family. He entered the army in December 16, 1772, as an ensign in the 2d Foot, and he was ere long engaged in serious service in that regiment, when it was despatched to Madras in 1779, to take a part in the formidable war that then raged between the infant British settlements at Madras and the redoubtable forces of Hyder Ali. In July 1780 Hyder's dreadful irruption into the Carnatic took place, when seventy thousand horse threatened with destruction the little army of five thousand men, who struggled to defend the British possessions on the coast. In this terrible campaign, young Baird was at once initiated into the most perilous and animating warfare. In September 1780, after a desperate and most heroic resistance, he was made prisoner by Hyder at the head of fifty thousand infantry and twenty-five thousand horse, in consequence of the accidental blowing up of the British ammunition-waggons in the centre of their square, which deprived them of their whole reserved ammunition, after the supply which the men had in their cartridge-boxes was expended in repelling the incessant charges of the Asiatic cavalry. Even after this disaster, and when their little square, now reduced to two hundred Europeans, had no weapons for their defence but the bayonets of the men and the swords of the officers, they repelled no less than thirteen charges of Hyder's horse; and at length the few survivors were only made prisoners by being fairly pierced through and overwhelmed by the ponderous elephants and innumerable squadrons of the enemy. Being made prisoner in this terrible conflict, Baird was conducted to Seringapatam, where he was chained by the leg to another captive, and confined in a dungeon for three years and a half. In July 1784, however, he obtained his release upon the conclusion of the peace with Hyder, and was promoted to the rank of Major in the 71st regiment, of which he soon became Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1791, he took an active part in the campaign against Tippoo Sultan and the storming of the intrenched camp in front of Seringapatam, and in 1793 he commanded a brigade of Europeans at the siege of Pondicherry. After this he returned for a short time to Europe, but was again sent back to India as Brigadier-General, in which capacity he commanded the storming party at Seringapatam, of which an account has already been given.—*Ante*, chap. xlix. § 71; *Scottish Biography*, i. 82, 83.

magazines and depots in the rear : a force which appeared, and doubtless was, if tolerably supported by its Peninsular allies, capable of achieving great things for the deliverance of Europe. Meanwhile, the Spanish troops, fully five thousand strong, which had been liberated at Lisbon, were equipped anew at the expense of the British government, and despatched by sea to Catalonia, from whence the most pressing representations had been sent of the necessity of regular troops to aid the efforts and improve the discipline of the numerous peasants in arms in the province ; the Russian fleet, in conformity with the treaty, was conducted to the British harbours ; and a central junta was formed at Lisbon, to administer the affairs of the kingdom in the absence of the Prince Regent. The preparations for the campaign being at length completed, the British troops began their march from the Portuguese capital, for the seat of war at the foot of the Pyrenees.¹

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

84.

Strength of
the united
British forces,
and their advance
into
Spain. " "

Sept. 25.

Oct. 13.

1 Lond. i.

179, 181.

Nap. i. 247,

248. South. i.

267. Nevis,

ii. 264, 287.

The decisive influence of the recent successes and central position of the English army, in possession of the capital and principal strongholds of the country, rendered the appointment of a central junta, and the defeat of the local intrigues every where set on foot in order to obtain a preponderating voice for particular men in its councils, a comparatively easy task in Portugal. But the case was very different in Spain, where jealousy of foreign interference had already risen to a most extravagant height ; where the people entertained a most exaggerated idea of their own strength and resources ; and many different provincial governments, elected under the pressure of necessity in different parts of the country, had opposite and jarring pretensions to advance for the supreme direction of affairs. Much division, and many dangerous jealousies, were rapidly rising upon this subject, when the junta, of Seville, whose prudence and success, as well as the consideration due to the great cities and opulent province which they represented, had already invested with a sort of lead in the affairs of the Peninsula, had the good fortune to bring forward a project which, from its equity and expedience, soon commanded universal assent.

85.

Great difficulty in forming a Central Junta at Madrid.

Aug. 3.

2 Tor. ii. 80,

92. Jovel-

lanos Me-

moria, 12,

24. South. ii.

277.

This was, that the different supreme juntas, each on the same day, should elect two deputies,² who should, when

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

united together, form the central government, to which all the local authorities were to be subject; that the local juntas should nevertheless continue their functions, in obedience to the commands of the supreme junta; and that the seat of government should be some town in La Mancha, equally convenient for all the deputies.

86.
Appointment
of a Central
Junta at
Madrid.
Sept. 25.

This proposal having met with general concurrence, the different provincial juntas elected their respective representatives for the central government, which was installed with extraordinary pomp at Aranjuez in the end of September, and immediately commenced its sittings. At first it consisted of twenty-four members, but their ranks were soon augmented, by the number of provinces which claimed the right of sending representatives, to thirty-five: an unhappy medium, too small for a legislative assembly, too large for an executive cabinet. Though it numbered several eminent men and incorruptible patriots among its members, particularly Count Florida Blanca, who, though in the eightieth year of his age, preserved undecayed the vigour of intellect and cautious policy which had distinguished his long administration, and Jovellanos, in whom the severities of a tedious captivity had still left unextinguished the light of an elevated understanding and the warmth of an unsuspecting heart; yet it was easy to foresee, what subsequent events too mournfully verified, that it was not composed of the elements calculated either to communicate vigour and decision to the national counsels, or impress foreign nations with a favourable idea of its probable stability. Formed for the most part of persons who were totally unknown, at least to public life, before the commencement of the revolution, and many of whom had been elevated to greatness solely by its convulsions, it was early distinguished by that overweening jealousy of their own importance, which in all men is the accompaniment of newly, and still more of undeservedly acquired power, and torn with intestine intrigues. These too broke out at a moment when the utmost possible unanimity and vigour were required to enable them to make head against the formidable tempest which was arising against them, under the guidance of the Emperor Napoleon.¹

The central junta displayed a becoming vigour in

¹ Tor. ii. 80,
90, 97. Nap.
i. 298, 308.
South. ii. 277,
313. Jovel-
lanos Me-
moria, ii. 12,
34.

asserting the inviolability of their privileges against Cuesta, who had arrested one of its members; but they were far from evincing equal energy in the more important duty of providing for the wants of the military force which was to maintain the conflict. So completely had the idea of their own invincibility taken possession of the Spaniards, that they never once contemplated the possibility of defeat. All their arrangements were based on the assumption that they were speedily to drive the French over the Pyrenees, and intended to meet the contingencies which might then occur. Nothing was foreseen or provided for in case of disaster; there were no magazines of reserved stores accumulated in the rear, no positions fortified, no fortresses armed; there was no money in the treasury, no funds in the military chests of the generals. The soldiers were naked, destitute of shoes, and rarely supplied with provisions: the cavalry dismounted; the artillery in the most wretched condition; even the magnificent supplies which the generosity of England had thrown with such profuse bounty into the Peninsula, were squandered or dilapidated by private cupidity, and seldom reached the proper objects of their destination. Corruption in its worst form pervaded every department of the state; the inferior officers sold or plundered the stores; the superior, in many instances made free with the military chest: in the midst of the general misrule the central junta, amidst eloquent and pompous declamation, could find no more worthy object of their practical deliberations than discussing the honorary titles which they were to bear, the ample salaries which they assigned to themselves, the dress they were to wear, and the form of the medals which were to be suspended round their necks. In the midst of this general scene of cupidity, imbecility, and vanity, nothing efficient was done, either for the service of the armies, or the defence of the state. This deplorable result is not to be ascribed exclusively, or even chiefly, to the character of the members of the central junta, or the leaders at the head of the troops. It arose from the nature of things, the overthrow of all regular government in Spain, and the jarring and conflicting interests of the popular assemblages by which its place had been supplied.¹ Democratic energy is a powerful

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

87.

Miserable
condition of
the Central
Government
and armies on
the Ebro.

¹ Tor. ii. 95,
102. Lond. i.
200, 203.
Nap. i. 310,
311. South.
ii. 298, 307,
315.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

auxiliary, and when directed or made use of, in the first instance, by aristocratic foresight or despotic authority, it often produces the most important results. But its vigour speedily exhausts itself if not sustained by the lasting compulsion of terror or force; and the tyranny of a Committee of Public Salvation is not less necessary to give success to its external operations than to restore credit or usefulness to its internal administration.

88.
The Marquis
Romana ob-
tains infor-
mation of
what is going
on in Spain.

1 Ante, c.
xlv. § 5.

In the north of Europe, however, decisive steps were adopted by the British government, which had the happiest results, and succeeded in restoring to the Spanish standards ten thousand of the veteran soldiers whom the prudent foresight and anticipating perfidy of Napoleon had so early removed from the Peninsula. It has been already mentioned, that so early as spring 1807, the French Emperor had made it the price of his reconciliation with Spain, after the premature proclamation of the Prince of Peace in the October preceding, that she should furnish sixteen thousand men to aid in the contest in the north of Europe, and that the corps of the Marquis of Romana was in consequence forwarded to the shores of the Baltic.¹ Soon after the commencement of hostilities in the Peninsula, Castanos, who had entered into very cordial and confidential communications with Sir Hew Dalrymple, then chief in command at Gibraltar, strongly represented to that officer the great importance of conveying to the Spanish corps, which was stationed in Jutland, secret information as to the real state of affairs, which was likely to lead to their at once declaring for the cause of their country. In consequence of this advice, the English government made various attempts to communicate with the Spanish forces, but they were at first frustrated by the vigilant eye which the French kept on their doubtful allies. At length, however, by the address of a Catholic priest named Robertson, the dangerous communication was effected, and Romana was informed, in a secret conference held in Lahn, of the extraordinary events which had occurred in the Peninsula—the victory in Andalusia, the repulse from Saragossa, the capitulation of Junot, the flight from Madrid.^{2*}

2 Tor. ii. 68,
69. Nap. i.
337. South,
ii. 336, 345.

* Robertson was despatched in a boat from Heligoland, of which the English had recently taken possession, to the coast of Jutland: but the principal

Violently agitated at this heart-stirring intelligence, the noble Spaniard did not for a moment hesitate as to the course which he should adopt. Robertson was immediately sent back with a request that a British naval force might be forwarded to convey away his troops, and that, if possible, the assistance of Sir John Moore and the English troops at Gottenberg might be granted in aid of the undertaking. The latter part of the request could not be complied with, as Sir John Moore, with the British troops, had already sailed for England; but Admiral Keats, with the fleet stationed in those seas, drew near to the coast of Jutland, and suddenly appeared off Nyborg in the island of Funen. Romana, having seized all the Danish craft he could collect, pushed across the arm of the sea which separated the mainland from that island, and, with the assistance of Keats, made himself master of the port and castle of Nyborg. From thence he traversed another strait to Langland, where all the troops he could collect were assembled together, and publicly informed of the extraordinary events which had occurred in the Peninsula, and which went to sever them from the connexion they had so long maintained with their brethren in arms. Kneeling around their standards, wrought to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by the intelligence they had received, with hands uplifted to heaven and tears streaming from their eyes, they unanimously swore to remain faithful to their country, and brave all the anger of the Emperor Napoleon, in the attempt to aid its fortunes.¹

Such was the universal zeal which animated them, that one of the regiments which lay at Ebeltoft having received the intelligence at ten in the evening, immediately started, and journeying all night and the greater part of the next day, reached their comrades at the point of embarkation in time to get off, after having marched

difficulty was to furnish him with a secret sign of intelligence, which, beyond the reach of any other's observation, might at once convince Romana of the reality and importance of his mission. This was at last fallen upon in a very singular way. Romana, who was an accomplished scholar, had been formerly intimate with Mr Frere when ambassador in Spain; and one day, having called when he was reading the *Gests* of the Cid, the English ambassador suggested a conjectural emendation of one of the lines.* Romana instantly perceived the propriety of the proposed emendation; and this line so amended was made the passport which Robertson was to make use of, which at once proved successful. See *SOUTHEY*, ii. 337.

* *Aun vea el hora que vos Merezea dos tanto.*
Mr Frere proposes to read "*Merezedes tanto.*"

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

89.

Escape of the
Marquis and
his troops.
Aug. 9 and
13.

Aug. 9.

¹ *Tor.* ii. 68,
70. *Nap.* i.
337, 338.
South. ii.
336, 337.

CHAP.
LIV.

1808.

90.

Extraordi-
nary scene at
the embarka-
tion of the
troops.
Aug. 13.

fifty miles in twenty-one hours. Nine thousand five hundred were brought away, and after touching at Gottenberg were forwarded in transports by the English government to the coasts of Galicia, where they were disembarked amidst shouts of joy before the middle of September, in time to share in the dangers which the efforts of Napoleon were preparing for their country. The transports, being stationed in the middle of Jutland, could not be rescued, and were made prisoners by the British troops; and as the horses of two of the regiments of cavalry which embarked could not be provided for in the English ships, they were abandoned on the beach by the horsemen whom they had transported so far from their native plains. These noble animals, eleven hundred in number, of the true Andalusian breed, all of which were unmutilated, seemed to share in the passions which agitated their masters. No sooner were they liberated on the sands from control, than, forming into squadrons, they charged violently with loud cries against each other; and when the British fleet hove out of sight, they could still be discerned by telescopes, fighting with each other on the beach, surrounded by the dead and the dying, with all the fury of human passions.^{1*}

¹ Tor. ii. 68,
70. South. ii.
336, 351.
Nap. i. 337,
338. *

* This singular anecdote as to the horses, which were all of the highest breed, and in the finest condition, is related by Southey on the authority of Sir Richard Keats himself, as well as in a contemporary journal, *Plain Englishman*, i. 294, on the same high testimony.—SOUTHEY, ii. 346.

CHAPTER LV.

IRRUPTION OF NAPOLEON INTO SPAIN.

THIS long and unprecedented train of disasters made the deepest impression on the far-seeing and prophetic mind of Napoleon. It was not the mere loss of soldiers, fortresses, or territory which affected him; these, to a sovereign possessed of such almost boundless resources, were of little importance, and could easily be supplied. It was their moral influence which he dreaded: it was the shake given to the opinions of men which devoured him with anxiety. No one knew better, or has expressed more clearly and emphatically, that his empire was founded entirely on opinion; that it was the minds of men whom his own victories and those of the Revolution had really subdued; and that, great as their triumphs had really been, it was the imaginative idea of their invincibility which constituted the secret charm that had fascinated and subdued the world. Now, however, the spell appeared to be broken; the veil was drawn aside, the charm dissolved. This had been done, too, by hands whose weakness and inexperience augmented the severity of the blow. Armies had surrendered, kingdoms been evacuated, capitals abandoned; in Andalusia the French legions had undergone a disgraceful capitulation; in Portugal experienced the fate of Closter-seven. These disasters had been inflicted, not by the stern courage of Russia or the discipline of Austria; not by the skill of civilisation or the perfection of art, but by the simple enthusiasm of an insurgent people; by bands at which the French legions had with reason scoffed; by those

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

1.
Deep impression which these events made on the mind of Napoleon.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

1 Thlb. vii. 1,
14. Month.
vi. 350.
South. ii.
359, 360.
Jom. ii. 70
81.

2.
Armaments
of Austria,
and negotia-
tions with
that power
and the
Princes of
the Rhenish
Confederacy.

Aug. 14.

2 Jom. ii. 80.
Pelet, i. 64,
72.

island warriors whose descent on the Continent his tutored journals had hailed as the dawn of yet brighter glories to the French arms.* Such misfortunes, coming from such quarters, appeared with reason to be doubly calamitous. His proclamations, instead of the heralds of victory, had become the precursors of defeat; and he anticipated in their ultimate effect, not merely the possible expulsion of his arms from the Peninsula, but the general insurrection of Europe against his authority.¹

Already this effect had in some degree appeared.—Austria, by a decree of 9th June, had directed the formation of a landwehr, or local militia, in all the provinces of her still vast dominions. The Archduke Charles, at the head of the war department, had infused an unheard-of activity into all branches of the army; and three hundred thousand provincial troops, already in the course of formation, promised to add an invaluable reserve to the regular forces. Pressed by Napoleon to give some account of such formidable preparations, Count Metternich, the imperial ambassador at Paris, alleged the specious excuse that the cabinet of Vienna was only imitating the conduct of its powerful neighbours; and that, when Bavaria had not merely adopted the system of the French conscription, but organised national guards, which raised its disposable force to a hundred thousand men, it became indispensable to take corresponding measures of security in the Hereditary States. The reason assigned was plausible; but it failed to impose upon the French Emperor, who forthwith directed the princes of the Rhenish confederacy to call out and encamp their respective contingents, and shortly after adopted the most energetic measures for the augmentation of the military strength of the empire.²

By a senatus-consultum of the 10th September, the Senate of France placed at the disposal of the French Emperor eighty thousand conscripts, taken from those coming to the legal age (eighteen to nineteen) in the years

* "Nothing," said the President of the Senate, in his public speech, "can be more agreeable to the French and to the Continent, than to see the English at length throw off the mask, and descend into the lists to meet our warriors. Would to God that eighty or a hundred thousand English would present themselves before us in an open field! The Continent has in every age been their tomb." Fifteen days afterwards the Convention of Cintra was published!—See *Moniteur*, 22d Sept. 1808.

1806-7-8 and 9, and eighty thousand additional from those of 1810, which last were, in an especial manner, destined to the defence of the coasts and frontiers of the empire. So far had the demands of the French Emperor already exceeded the increase of the human race, and the boundless consumption of mankind in the Revolutionary wars outstripped even the prolific powers of nature! The adulatory expressions with which this frightful demand was acquiesced in by the Senate, were not less characteristic of the fawning servility, than its anticipating the resources of future years, of the iron tyranny, which distinguished the government of the Empire. "How," said Lacépède, their president, "would the shades of Louis XIV., of Francis I., of the great Henry, be consoled by the generous resolutions taken by Napoleon! The French hasten to respond to his sacred voice! He requires a new proof of their affection; they hasten with generous ardour to furnish it to him. The wish of the French people, sire! is the same as that of your Majesty: the war of Spain *is politic, it is just, it is necessary; it will be victorious*. May the English send their whole armies to combat in the Peninsula: they will furnish only feeble glories to our arms, and fresh disgrace to themselves." Such was the roseate hue under which the titled and richly endowed senators of France represented the hideous spectacle of a hundred and fifty thousand men being torn from their homes to meet certain destruction, in the prosecution of the most perfidious and unjust aggression recorded in history; and such the triumphs which they anticipated for their arms, when Providence was preparing for them, as its deserved punishment, the catastrophes of Salamanca and Vittoria.¹

At the same time, a subsidiary treaty was concluded with Prussia, calculated to relieve, in some degree, that unhappy power from the chains which had fettered it since the battle of Jena. Napoleon, vanquished by necessity, and standing in need of a hundred thousand soldiers of the Grand Army for the Peninsular war, was driven to more moderate sentiments. It was stipulated that, for the space of ten years, the Prussian army should not exceed forty thousand men; that Glogau, Stettin, and Custrin should be garrisoned by French troops till the entire pay-

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

3.

Napoleon's
preparations
to meet the
danger and
great levy of
men by the
French gov-
ernment.
Sept. 10.

¹ Moniteur,
Sept. 10.
Montg. vi.
350. Jom. ii.
82, 83.

4.

Subsidiary
treaty with
Prussia.
Sept. 8.

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

ment of arrears of contributions of every description ; that their garrisons, each four thousand strong, should be maintained and paid solely at the expense of Prussia ; that seven military roads, for the use of France and her allies, should traverse the Prussian dominions ; and that the arrears of the war contributions should be reduced to one hundred and forty million francs, or £5,600,000 sterling : but that, at the expiration of forty days after these sums were provided for, the French troops should, with the exception of these fortresses, evacuate the Prussian dominions. To Prussia this evacuation was a source of unspeakable relief, and notwithstanding that the restriction on the army was both humiliating and hurtful, yet the cabinet of Frederick William had no alternative but submission. They contrived, however, by the skilful change of the soldiers called out into actual service, to elude the most galling part of the obligation, and prepared the means of political resurrection in future times.¹

¹ Montg. vi.
350. Martens,
N. R. i. 106,
127.

5.
Interview at
Erfurth with
Alexander.

Napoleon, however, was well aware that, even after these treaties and precautions, he was still exposed to great danger from the renewed hostility of the German states in his rear, while engaged with the armies of England and Spain in front in the Peninsula, if he was not well established in the alliance with Russia. It was in the breast of Alexander that the true security for the peace of the Continent beyond the Rhine was to be found. This was more especially the case, as the losses and serious aspect of the Spanish war had already rendered it necessary to withdraw a large part of the Grand Army from the north of Germany ; and before winter, not more than a hundred thousand French soldiers would remain to assert the French supremacy in the centre of Europe. Impressed with these ideas, the French Emperor used his utmost efforts to prevail on the Czar to meet him at a town in the north of Germany, where the destinies of the world might be arranged. Such was the ascendant which he had gained over his mind during the negotiations at Tilsit, and such the attractions of the new objects of ambition in Finland and on the Danube, which he had had the address to present to his ambition, that Alexander completely fell into his views. Erfurth was the town selected for this purpose, and there a conference was held

between the two potentates, almost rivalling that of Tilsit in interest and importance. On his route for Germany, the Emperor met large bodies of the Grand Army on their road from the Rhine to the Pyrenean frontier; he addressed them in one of those nervous proclamations which ever bear so strong an impress of his genius, but which, long the heralds of his victories, began now to afford a curious contrast to the disasters he was destined to undergo.* The troops traversed France in the highest spirits, animated by the Emperor's address, magnificently feasted by the municipalities, beneath triumphal arches, and amidst songs of congratulation from their fellow-citizens. Vain illusion! They were marching only to the scene of protracted agony; to whiten by their bones the fields of Spain; to a lengthened conflict, which, ushered in at first by brilliant victories, was destined in the end to thin their ranks by its carnage, and overwhelm their honour by its disasters.¹

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

¹ Thib. 49,
51. Montg.
vi. 352.
Jom. ii. 84,
85.

The Emperor Alexander set out before Napoleon, and on his way paid a melancholy visit to the King and Queen of Prussia at Königsberg. Proceeding on his route, he rapidly traversed the Prussian states, received with marked gratification the honours paid to him by the French troops; took Marshal Lannes with him in his own carriage, and expressed publicly to the French officers the satisfaction which he felt "at finding himself among such brave men, such renowned warriors." Proceeding in this manner, and received every where with the utmost distinction by the French authorities, he arrived at Weimar late on the evening of the 26th, and found every thing prepared for his reception by his brother the Grand-duke Constantine, and the French

6.
Its secret
Object, and
tenor of the
conferences
held there.

Sept. 26.

* "Soldiers! after having triumphed on the banks of the Danube and the Vistula, you have traversed Germany by forced marches. I now make you traverse France without giving you a moment's repose. Soldiers! I have need of you. The hideous presence of the leopard [the arms of England] defiles the continent of Spain and Portugal. Let it fly dismayed at your appearance! Let us carry our arms to the Columns of Hercules; there also we have outrages to avenge. Soldiers! you have surpassed the renown of all modern armies, but have you yet equalled the glory of the Roman legions, which in the same campaign frequently triumphed on the Rhine and the Euphrates, in Illyria and on the Tagus? A long peace, enduring prosperity, shall be the reward of your labours. A true Frenchman should never taste of repose till the seas are enfranchised from their oppressors. Soldiers! all that you have already done, all that you will yet do for the happiness of the French people, will be eternally engraved in my heart."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 50.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

ambassador Caulaincourt, who had arrived two days before. Meanwhile Napoleon, in more than regal state, was leisurely advancing from Paris, surrounded by the sovereigns, princes, and ministers of Germany, enjoying the secret satisfaction of exhibiting the Russian Autocrat awaiting his arrival in an inconsiderable town of Germany, above five hundred miles distant from the nearest point of his dominions. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 27th, he made his public entry into Erfurth, and, after reviewing the troops, proceeded on horseback to meet Alexander, who had left Weimar at the same hour to approach his august ally. The two sovereigns met on the highway, between the villages of Ottsted and Nora, near a remarkable pear-tree, which is still to be seen on the road-side. Alexander immediately descended from his carriage; Napoleon alighted from his horse, and the two monarchs embraced with the strongest marks of mutual esteem. The French Emperor was decorated with the order of St Andrew of Russia, the Russian bore the grand badge of the legion of honour on his bosom. Magnificent presents were interchanged on both parts; side by side the two Emperors rode into Erfurth, amidst the roar of artillery, the cheers of multitudes, and the thundering acclamations of ten thousand soldiers. When they arrived at the hotel prepared for the Czar, the monarchs again embraced, and ascended the stairs arm in arm. Napoleon requested Alexander to give the watchword of the day; he complied, and it was "Erfurth and confidence." The two sovereigns dined together, and in the evening a general illumination evinced the intoxicated joy of the inhabitants.^{1*}

¹ Personal
Observation.
Thib. vii. 61.
Mont. vi. 352.

7.
Fêtes and
spectacles at
Erfurth.

No adequate idea can be formed of the greatness of Napoleon's power, or the almost irresistible sway which he had acquired in northern and central Europe, but by those who witnessed the pomp and deference with which he was surrounded at Tilsit and Erfurth, and four years afterwards at Dresden. Environed by a brilliant *cortège* of marshals, generals, diplomatists, and staff-officers, he was at the same time the object of obsequious attention to a crowd of princes and inferior potentates, who

* The place between Ottsted and Nora, where this remarkable meeting took place, is still shown to travellers.—*Personal Observation.*

depended on his breath for the political existence or nominal independence. All the beauty, rank, and distinction of Germany were assembled; seventy princes or independent sovereigns were in attendance; and literally it might be said, that the monarchs of Europe watched for a favourable sign from the mighty conqueror's chamberlains. The two Emperors spent the forenoons together, conversing on the public affairs of Europe and the separate plans of administration for their vast dominions; they then rode out in company to a review or inspection of their respective troops, dined alternately with each other, and in the evening went to the same box at the theatre. A brilliant band of the most distinguished French performers had come from Paris to grace the conference, and during a fortnight the theatre of Erfurth, resplendent with illustrious men and beautiful women, beheld the masterpieces of Racine and Corneille performed by the talents of Talma, Saint Pris, Mademoiselles Duchesnois and Bourgoin, besides a host of inferior performers.¹*

¹ Thib. vii.
61, 70. Las
Cas. iv. 232.
Hard. x. 239.

* The attentions of Alexander and Napoleon to each other at Erfurth, though delicate, were got up with so much anxiety, as to convey to the spectators the impression that the intimacy of Tilsit had somewhat declined, and that a feeling of which they were on every occasion so very solicitous to give public demonstration, could not in reality have a very deep foundation. On one occasion Alexander expressed great admiration of a singularly beautiful dressing-case and breakfast set of porcelain and gold in Napoleon's sleeping apartment: they were sent to him as a present on the same evening. At the representation of *Œdipe* on October 3, when the line was repeated,—

"*L'Amitie d'un grand homme est un bienfait des dieux.*"

Alexander turned to Napoleon, and presented to him his hand. A few days after, the Czar, when preparing to go into the *salle-a-manger* to dinner, perceived that he had forgotten his sword. Napoleon immediately unbuckled his own, and presented it to him.—"I accept it as a mark of your friendship," replied Alexander. "Your Majesty may be well assured I shall never draw it against you." In the midst of all his grandeur, Napoleon had sufficient greatness of soul and true discernment to attempt no concealment of his origin. At dinner one day the conversation turned on the Golden Bull, and the primate of Germany insisted that it had been published in 1409.—"I beg your pardon," observed Napoleon; "*When I was a second lieutenant of artillery, I was three years at Valence, and there I had the good fortune to lodge with a learned person, in whose library I learned that and many other valuable details. Nature has given me a memory singularly tenacious of figures.*" Mademoiselle Bourgoin, whose personal charms were equal to her talents as an actress, attracted the particular notice of the Emperor Alexander; and he inquired of Napoleon if there would be any inconvenience in his forming her personal acquaintance. "None whatever," replied Napoleon, "except that it would be a certain mode of making you thoroughly known to all Paris. The day after to-morrow, at the post hour, the most minute particulars of your visits to her will be despatched: and soon there will not be a statuary in Paris who will not be in a situation to model your person from head to foot." This hint had the effect of cooling the rising passion of the Russian Emperor, who, with all his admiration for the fair sex, had an extreme apprehension of such a species of notoriety. It was at Erfurth that Napoleon made the memorable observation to Talma on his erro-

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

8.

And on the
field of Jena.¹ Ante, c. 43,
§ 41.² Thib. vii.
61, 76.
Montg. vi.
353, 354.
Las Cas. iv.
232. Hard.
x. 239.

On the 6th October the whole court proceeded to Weimar, where they were magnificently entertained by the Grand-duke of that place; and Napoleon enjoyed the satisfaction of conversing with Goethe, Wieland, and the other illustrious men who have thrown an imperishable lustre over German literature. On the 7th, the whole party visited the field of Jena. An elegant temple had been constructed by the Grand-duke on the highest summit of the Landgrafenberg, the scene of Napoleon's frigid bivouac two years before, on the night before the battle;¹ and a little lower down were a number of tents, of sumptuous construction, where the Emperor and his *cortège* of kings were entertained, and from whence he pointed out to Alexander the line of the different movements which, on that memorable spot, had led to the overthrow of the Czar's most cherished projects. At length, after seventeen days spent together in the closest intimacy, the two Emperors, on the 14th October, the anniversary of the battle of Jena, rode out together to the spot where they had met on the 27th September; they there alighted from their horses, and walked side by side for a few minutes in close conversation, and then, embracing, bade each other a final adieu. Alexander returned rapidly towards Poland; Napoleon remeasured his steps slowly and pensively towards Erfurth. They never met again in this world.^{2*}

But it was neither to amuse themselves with reviews and theatrical representations, nor to make proposals to Austria and England, which they were well aware could not be listened to, that the two Emperors had come so far

neous view of the character of Nero, in the *Britannicus* of Racine: viz., that the poet had not represented him as a tyrant in the commencement of his career; and that it was not till love, his ruling passion at the moment, was thwarted, that he became violent, cruel, and oppressive.—See LAS CASES, iv. 232; and THIBAUDEAU, vii. 61, 65, 71.

* In one of their conversations, Alexander strongly represented to the French Emperor the resistance which he experienced in his senate from the aristocratic chiefs, in his projects for the public good. "Believe me," said Napoleon, "how large soever a throne may be, it will always be found too small for two masters."—MONTGAILLARD, vi. 354.

Though Austria was not admitted as a party to the Conference at Erfurth, Baron Vincent, envoy of the cabinet of Vienna, came with a letter from the Emperor Francis on the subject of the armaments on either side in southern Germany; and a joint memorial was presented by the Emperors of France and Russia, proposing a termination of hostilities to the government of Great Britain. But these important state papers will more fitly come under consideration in the succeeding chapters, which treat specifically of the affairs of Austria and England at this momentous crisis of their history.³

³ See below,
c. lvi. and lvii.

and remained together so long. It was with no view to peace, but, on the contrary, with a distinct prophetic anticipation of an approaching resumption of hostilities, that the conference at Erfurth took place. Napoleon clearly perceived that Austria was about to take advantage of his immersion in the Peninsular war, and of the extraordinary preparations which England was making for a Continental campaign, to renew the contest in Germany; and it was to Russia alone that he could look for a sure guarantee of the peace of the North of Europe during the arduous crisis which was approaching. Albeit internally convinced of the necessity of a fearful contest in the end with the power of France, Alexander was not less sensible of the importance of gaining time for the preparations for it. He was strongly impressed with the conviction, that the peculiar and national interests of Russia were in the mean time chiefly to be promoted by remaining firm in the French alliance, and that when the evil day did come, the best preparation for it would be found in the augmentation of the strength of the empire in Finland and on the Danube, which was likely to follow an adherence to his present engagements. Thus, while both these great potentates were lavishing professions of friendship and regard on each other, they were in reality nursing the feelings destined to lead to inextinguishable hostility in their hearts: Napoleon returned, almost blinded by Russian flattery, to Paris, to prepare, in the subjugation of the Peninsula, the means of arranging the countless host which he was afterwards to lead to the Kremlin; and Alexander, loaded with French presents, remeasured his steps to Muscovy to organise the force destined, after adding Finland and the principalities on the Danube to his dominions, to hurl back to the Seine the tide of Gallic invasion.^{1*}

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

9.
Secret views
of both
parties at the
conference.

¹ Thib. vii.
76, 78.
Boutour. i.
32, 33, 45.
Jom. iii. 86.

* "The Emperor Alexander," says Boutourlin, "felt that the alliance concluded at Tilsit, and cemented at Erfurth, as soon as it ceased to be conformable to the interests of Napoleon, would come to an end; and that the grand crisis was approaching which was destined either to consolidate the universal empire which the French Emperor was endeavouring to establish on the Continent, or to break the chains which retained so many Continental states under his rule. Determined never to submit to any condition inconsistent with the honour of his crown, the Emperor of Russia regarded the rupture as near and unavoidable, and thenceforward applied himself silently to organise the immense resources of

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

10.

Tenor of the
conferences
held there.

The conferences of Erfurth were not reduced, like those of Tilsit, to formal or secret treaties; at least, if such were signed, they have not yet transpired from any of the European archives. But they were not, on that account, the less important, or the less calculated to determine, for a course of years, the fate of the Continental monarchies. In the verbal conversations which took place, the great object of the two potentates was to obtain the consent of each other to their respective projects of aggrandisement at the expense of the lesser states in their vicinity; and their mutual interests or necessities rendered this an easy task. Alexander gave his sanction to the invasion of Spain and Portugal, and the placing of princes of the Napoleon dynasty on the thrones of the Peninsula, as well as to the establishment of Murat in the kingdom of Naples, and the annexation of Tuscany to the French empire. The effects of this consent soon appeared in the accrediting of Russian ambassadors to the courts of these infant sovereigns. On the other hand, Napoleon consented to the uniting of Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia to the already vast dominions of the Czar, admitted his relation and future brother-in-law, the Grand-duke of Oldenburg, into the Confederation of the Rhine, gave satisfactory explanations in regard to the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, and held out to the Emperor of the East the prospect of obtaining aid from France in the attempt to stretch his mighty arms over the Asiatic Continent, and give a deadly wound to the power of England on the plains of Hindostan.¹

¹ Bont. ii. 34,
35. Hard.
x. 234, 240.
Las Cas. iv.
232.

11.
Concessions
made by
Napoleon to
Russia and
Prussia.

¹ Ante, c. lv.
§ 4.

In return for so many concessions, he procured from Alexander a promise to aid France with a considerable force in the event of a war with Austria; and conceded to his earnest entreaties a considerable relaxation of the oppressive burdens under which Prussia had so long groaned. The arrear of contributions, fixed at 140,000,000 francs, by the treaty of 8th September,¹ was reduced to 125,000,000; and a more important relaxation took place in the form of payment, by which, in consideration of 50,000,000 of francs received by Daru on the 5th

his states, to resist the danger which was approaching; a danger which promised to be the more terrible, that Russia would have to sustain it to all appearance unsupported, against the accumulated forces of the greater part of Europe."—BOUTOURLIN, l. 45.

November, and 70,000,000 more for which promissory notes were granted, the royal revenues were to be restored to the Prussian authorities; and the French troops, which were urgently required in the Peninsula, were, with the exception of the garrisons of Stettin, Custrin, and Glogau, entirely to evacuate the Prussian dominions. Thus had Napoleon the address to make his disasters in Spain, which imperatively required the removal of the French troops from the North of Germany, the means of gratifying Alexander by an apparent concession to his wishes, and diminishing the irritation of Prussia, which, in the event of hostilities with Austria, might prove, even after all its disasters, a formidable enemy in his rear.¹

Two other more delicate subjects of discussion were, after being touched on, averted rather than settled, by the diplomatic skill of the two Emperors, and left the seeds of inextinguishable future jealousy in their minds. The first was a proposal by Napoleon, who already had resolved to divorce Josephine, for the hand of the Grand-duchess Catherine Paulowna, the favourite sister of the Emperor; an overture, which the astute Russian evaded by referring the matter, not to the reigning Empress, whose ambition its brilliancy might have dazzled, but to the Empress-dowager, whose firmness of character was proof against the seduction. She hastened to terminate the dangerous negotiation by alleging religious scruples, and shortly after marrying her daughter to Prince Oldenburg. The second was, an amicable but resolute contest for the possession of Constantinople. Napoleon, as he himself has told us,* could not bring his mind to cede to his rival the Queen of the East: Alexander, with justice, regarded it as the outlet to his southern dominions—the back-door of his empire,—and was earnest that its key should be placed in his hands. Fearful of interrupting their present harmony by any such irreconcilable theme of discord, the subject was, by common consent, laid aside:² The City of Constantine was suffered to remain in the hands of the Turks, who, in every other respect, were abandoned to

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

¹ Hard. x.
239, 245.
Bout. i. 34,
35. Las
Cas. iv. 232,
233.

12.
Their differences concerning Napoleon's marriage, and Turkey.

² Thib. vii.
76, 78.
Hard. x. 239,
245. Bout. i.
34, 35. Jom.
iii. 86. Las.
Cas. iv. 232,
233.
O'Meara, i.
282.

* "We talked," says Napoleon, "of the affairs of Turkey at Erfurth. Alexander was very desirous that I should agree to his obtaining possession of Constantinople, but I could never bring my mind to consent to it. It is the noblest harbour in the world, is placed in the finest situation, and is itself worth a kingdom."—LAS CASES, iv. 231; and O'MEARA, i. 362.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

Muscovite ambition. But the tender point had been touched—the chord which jarred in the hearts of each struck ; and the inestimable prize formed the secret subject of hostility, which, as much as jealousy of English power, afterwards led the French legions to Borodino and the Kremlin.

13.
Treaty with
Prussia, and
Murat de-
clared King
of Naples.
Nov. 5.

Dec. 3.

Immediately after the conference at Erfurth, a formal treaty was concluded with Prussia, by which the alleviations to her miseries provided for by the arbiters of Europe were reduced to writing ; and in a short time the evacuation of the Prussian states, with the exception of the three retained fortresses, took place. Restored by this removal, and the recovery of the right of collecting his revenue, in a certain degree to his rank of an independent sovereign, Frederick William, in company with his beautiful Queen, returned to the capital, and made his public entry into Berlin amidst the transports and tears of his subjects. The results of the secret conference at Erfurth soon developed themselves. Murat was declared by Napoleon King of Naples and Sicily ; and, leaving the theatre of his sanguinary measures and rash hostility in the Peninsula, hastened to take possession of his newly acquired dominions. He was received with universal joy by the inconstant people, who seemed equally delighted with any sovereign sent to them by the great northern conqueror. His entry into Naples was as great a scene of triumph, felicitations, and enthusiasm, as that of Joseph had been. Shortly afterwards, however, he gave proof of the vigour which was to attend at least his military operations, by a successful expedition against the Island of Capri, which the English had held for three years, but now yielded with a small garrison under Sir Hudson Lowe, which capitulated and was sent back to England, to a vigorous and well-conceived attack from the French forces.¹

¹ Montg. vi.
365. Mar-
tens, Sup. i.
106. Thib.
vii. 149. Bot.
iv. 237, 239.

14.
Napoleon /
returns to
Paris, and
sets out for
the Ebro.

Secured by the conferences at Erfurth from all danger in his rear, Napoleon speedily returned to Paris ; and, after presiding over the opening of the legislative assembly, then resolved, with his wonted vigour, to set out for the Pyrenees. He was determined by a sudden attack to disperse the Spanish armaments and capture Madrid, before either the English auxiliaries could acquire a solid footing in

the Peninsula, or Austria could gain time to put in motion the extensive armaments she was preparing on the Danube. Leaving Paris in the end of October, he arrived at Bayonne on the 3d November, and immediately disposed his forces for active operations. The effect of the vigorous exertions which he had made to strengthen his armies in that quarter, was now beginning to display itself. The fifty thousand soldiers who in the middle of August were concentrated on the Ebro, dejected by disaster, had swelled by the end of September, as if by enchantment, to ninety thousand men present under arms in Navarre, besides twenty thousand, under St Cyr, in Catalonia. This body, already so formidable, subsequently received vast accessions of force from the troops arriving from Germany, especially the Imperial Guard, and the corps of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, all of which were veterans from the Grand Army, confident in themselves, and inured to victory.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

Oct. 29.
Nov. 3.1 Nap. i. 361,
363. Thib.
vii. 156.
Tor. ii. 119.

During the whole of October, the road from Bayonne to Vittoria was crowded with horsemen and carriages; through every opening in the Pyrenees, foot-soldiers were pouring in endless multitudes to reinforce the grand muster in Navarre. Conformably to his general custom, Napoleon divided the whole army into eight corps, commanded by as many marshals, whose names, already rendered immortal in the rolls of fame, seemed a sure prelude to victory.* Their united force, when the Emperor took the field in the beginning of November, was not less than three hundred thousand men, of whom fully forty thousand were cavalry; and, after deducting the troops in Catalonia, and those which required to be maintained in garrison in the northern fortresses, and the sick and absent, at least a hundred and eighty thousand could be

15.

Immense
force there
collected by
Napoleon.

* First corps, Victor, Duke of Belluno,	33,937
Second corps, Bessières, Duke of Istria, afterwards Soult, Duke of Dalmatia,	33,054
Third corps, Moncey, Duke of Cornegliano,	37,690
Fourth corps, Lefebvre, Duke of Dantzic,	25,984
Fifth corps, Mortier, Duke of Treviso,	26,713
Sixth corps, Ney, Duke of Elchingen,	38,033
Seventh corps, General St Cyr in Catalonia,	42,107
Eighth corps, Junot, Duke of Abrantes,	25,730
Reserve, Napoleon in person,	42,322
On march from France,	14,060

319,690

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

¹ Tor. ii. 119.
Napier, i.
361, 362, 377.
South. ii. 386,
387. Thib.
vii. 150, 152.

16.
Positions and
strength of
the Span-
iards.

relied on for offensive operations on the Ebro. But the magnitude of this force, great as it was, constituted the least formidable part of its character. It was its incomparable discipline, spirit, and equipment, the skill and vigour of its officers, the docility and experience of its soldiers, the central and impregnable position which it occupied among the mountains of Navarre, and the unity of design which it was well known would soon be communicated to its operations by the consummate talents of Napoleon, which constituted its real strength, and rendered the friends of freedom in Europe justly fearful of the collision of such a host with the divided and inexperienced armies of the Spanish provinces.^{1*}

These armies, though very numerous on paper, and in considerable strength in the field, were far from being in a situation, either from discipline, equipment, or position, to make head against so formidable an enemy. The Spanish troops were divided into three armies; that of the right under Palafox, consisting of eighteen thousand infantry and five hundred horse, occupied the country between Saragossa and Sanguessa, and was composed almost entirely of Arragonese. The centre, under Castanos, which boasted of the victors of Baylen in its ranks, was twenty-eight thousand strong, including thirteen hundred horse, and had thirty-six pieces of cannon; it lay at Tarazona and Agreda, right opposite to the centre of the French position. The left, under Blake, thirty thousand in number, almost entirely Galicians, but with hardly any cavalry, and only twenty-six guns, was stationed on the rocky mountains near Reynosa, from whence the Ebro takes its rise. Thus, seventy-four thousand infantry, and two thousand horse, with eighty-six guns, were all that the Spaniards could rely upon for immediate operations on the Ebro: for although considerable reserves were collecting in the rear, yet they were too far from the scene of action, and their discipline and equipment not in a sufficient state of forwardness to per-

* Before assuming the command of the army, Napoleon had said, in his opening address to the legislative body at Paris, "In a few days I shall set out to place myself at the head of my army, and, with the aid of God, crown at Madrid the King of Spain, and plant my eagles on the towers of Lisbon!"—*Discourse*, 25th Oct. 1808. *Moniteur*, 26th October 1808; and THIB. vii. 86. And *Imperial Muster-Rolls*, NAPIER, i. 88, *Appendix*

mit of their either arriving in time at the theatre of conflict, or taking any useful part in it, if they were there.* Seventy thousand Spanish infantry and two thousand Spanish cavalry, could never be considered a match for a hundred and fifty thousand French foot, and thirty thousand horse, even under the most favourable circumstances. Least of all could they be relied on, when the French occupied a central position, defended by almost inaccessible mountains, and were guided by one commander of consummate abilities; while their undisciplined antagonists, scattered over a circumference two hundred miles in length, and separated from each other by deep ravines, rapid rivers, and impassable ridges, were under the command of different and independent generals, jealous of each other, and gifted with comparatively moderate military talents.¹

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

¹ Nap. i. 392,
393. Tor. ii.
103, 104.
Thib. vii.
152, 153.
Tor. ii. 180.

The British forces, it is true, under Sir John Moore and Sir David Baird, were rapidly approaching the scene of action; but their distance, notwithstanding all their efforts, was still such as to preclude the hope of their being in a situation to render any effectual assistance. Sir John Moore's forces, which set out on their march from Lisbon, as already mentioned, in the middle of October, had broken, for the sake of procuring better roads for the artillery and waggon-train, into two columns; and while the main body, under Sir John in person, followed the direct road by Abrantes, Almeida, and Ciudad Rodrigo, a lesser division, but with the reserve and most of the guns, took the more circuitous route by Elvas, Badajoz, Talavera, and Madrid. It was not, however, till the 8th November, that this heavily encumbered corps reached the Spanish capital, and on the 27th of the same month that it crossed the Guadarrama mountains, before which time the fate of all the Spanish armies on the Ebro was sealed. Meanwhile, Sir John Moore was farther advanced;

17.
March, position, and
strength of
the British
army.
Oct. 13.

Nov. 8.
Nov. 27

* These reserves were stated to be as follows; but they were all distant from the scene of action, and had, for the most part, hardly acquired the rudiments of the military art.

Castilians at Segovia, about 150 miles in the rear, . . .	12,000
Estremadurans at Talavera,	13,000
Andalusians in La Mancha,	14,000
Asturians in reserve at Llanes,	18,000

Total, 57,000

CHAP.
LV.

1808.
Oct. 13.
1 Nap. i. 425,
431. Lond.
i. 181, 185.
South. ii: 470.

for, on the 11th, he crossed the Spanish frontier, and, on the 18th, had collected the bulk of his forces at Salamanca; but Sir David Baird, who had landed at Corunna on the 13th October, had only, by great exertion, succeeded in reaching Astorga in Leon, four days' march from Salamanca, on the 20th November.¹

18.
Deplorable
division of
the British
and Spanish
troops.

Thus the British army, not in all more than thirty thousand strong, was split into three divisions, severally stationed at the Escorial, Salamanca, and Astorga, distant eighty or a hundred miles from each other, and without any common base or line of operations; and the Spaniards, a hundred miles farther in advance, were also divided into three armies, separated by still greater distances from each other; while Napoleon lay with a hundred and eighty thousand veteran troops clustered round the basin of Vittoria. It was easy to see that the allies, exhibiting in this respect a melancholy contrast to their antagonists, were but novices in the art of war, and signally ignorant of the importance of time in its combinations; and that the English in particular, inheriting too much of the character of their Saxon ancestors, were, like Athelstane the Unready, still unprepared to strike till the moment for decisive operations had passed.²*

Napoleon, who was well aware of the importance of

2 South. ii.
470. Nap. i.
425, 431.
Lond. i. 181,
189.

* These observations apply to those having the general direction of the Allied campaign, and especially the English government, who, at this period, were far from being adequately impressed with the vital importance of time in war. Their instructions for the campaign were dated so late as October 6. Both the gallant generals intrusted with the direction of the English army pressed forward with all imaginable expedition after they received them; and Sir John Moore in particular, as it will appear in the sequel, with mournful resolution, began an important advance under circumstances which, to all but a soldier of honour, were utterly desperate. It was impossible for him to commence operations before the junction with Sir David Baird, which did not take place till the end of November. But still, in all concerned, there was at this period an evident want of the vigour and expedition requisite for success in war. Napoleon would never have permitted the main English army to have lingered inactive at Lisbon from the end of August, when the Convention at Cintra was concluded, till the middle of October, when the march for Spain commenced, nor delayed the British expedition under Sir David Baird till it reached the Spanish shores for the first time on the 18th of that month. But these were the faults of government. The greatest error, in a military point of view, of Sir John Moore, was separating the artillery from the infantry and cavalry in the advance into Spain. For this oblivion of the first rule of military movements, viz. to station each portion of the army so that its different arms may, in case of need, support and aid each other, it is hardly possible to find any excuse. It is difficult to conceive how the direct road by Almeida could at that period have been impassable for artillery and waggons, when it had so recently before been traversed by Junot with all his army, and was ever after the great line of military communication which the Duke of Wellington made use of from the capital to the frontier; and, at any rate, if the passage at that period was impracticable for

striking a decisive blow in the outset, and dispersing the Spanish armies in his front, before the warlike and disciplined reserve of the English troops could arrive at the scene of action, lost no time, after his arrival on the Bidassoa, in pressing forward the most active operations. Some inconsiderable actions had, before his arrival, taken place on the left, where Blake had, since the 18th September, been engaged in an offensive movement, from which no material results had ensued. Prior to this the French had evacuated Burgos and Tudela, and extended themselves towards Bilboa, which they still held, much against the will of Napoleon, who strongly censured such a proceeding, as gaining nothing in strength of position, and losing much in moral influence.* Blake broke up from Reynosa on the 18th September with thirty thousand Galicians, and advanced to Santander. The effect of this movement was to make the French concentrate their forces in the basin of Vittoria; and Blake attacked Bilboa with fifteen thousand men, which fell the day after it was invested; while the French withdrew up the valley of Durango, and all the lateral valleys in its vicinity, to the higher parts of the mountains of Navarre. But though these operations were at first successful, yet the natural effects of the presumption and want of foresight of the

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

19.

Movements
on the
French left
before the
arrival of
Napoleon.

Sept. 18.

Sept. 23.

the guns, that might have been a good reason for sending the whole army round by Elvas, but it could be none for separating it into two parts, severed by two hundred miles from each other, and exposing either to the chance of destruction, when the other was not at hand to lend it any support. Colonel Napier, much to his credit, admits that this separation violated a great military principle, though he endeavours to defend it in that particular case as unattended with danger. It will appear in the sequel, that the greatest commanders sometimes unnecessarily fall into a similar forgetfulness; and that the cantoning the English Infantry apart from the cavalry and artillery on the Flemish frontier, and within the reach of the enemy's attack, in 1815, had wellnigh induced a serious disaster at Quatre-Bras.—See NAPIER, i. 334, and *Infra*.

* "The line of the Ebro," says Napoleon, "was actually taken; it must be kept. To advance from that river without an object would create indecision; but why evacuate Burgos—why abandon Tudela? Both were of importance, both politically and morally; the latter as commanding a stone bridge and the canal of Saragossa; the former as the capital of a province, the centre of many communications, a town of great fame, and of relative value to the French army. If occupied in force, it would threaten Palencia, Valladolid, even Madrid itself. If the enemy occupies Burgos, Logrono, and Tudela, the French army will be in a pitiful situation." It is remarkable how early the experienced eye of the French Emperor, at the distance of three hundred leagues from the scene of action, discerned the military importance of Burgos—a town then unknown to military fame; but the value of which was afterwards so strongly felt by the Duke of Wellington, that he strained every nerve, and exposed himself to imminent risk in the close of the brilliant campaign of 1812, in the unsuccessful attempt to effect its reduction. See *Note, Sur les Affaires d'Espagne, August 1808, taken at Vittoria*; NAPIER, *App. No. iv. p. 18*.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

¹ Nap. i. 343,
369. South.
i. 387, 689.
Tor. ii. 104,
105.

20.
Check of
Castanos at
Logrono.
Oct. 27.

Spanish government and generals soon developed itself. Blake had engaged in this laborious and dangerous mountain-warfare without magazine stores, or any base of operations, and with only seventy rounds of ammunition for each gun. His men, when the winter was approaching and the snow beginning to fall, were without great-coats, and many without shoes: and the bulk of the forces being grouped around Burgos, left his right flank exposed to successful attack.¹

A combined attack had been arranged between the Spanish generals, along the whole circumference which they occupied, upon the central mountain position of the French army. But such a complicated movement, difficult and hazardous even with the best disciplined troops, when acting along such an extensive and rugged line of country, was altogether hopeless with the disorderly and ill-appointed bands of the Peninsular patriots. An attack by Castanos, with the Andalusian army, upon the French posts on the Ebro around Logrono, though at the first attended with some success, at length terminated in disaster; and the Spanish division of Pignatelli was driven back with the loss of all its artillery, and immediately dispersed. Discouraged by this check, Castanos fell back to Calahorra; and dissensions, threatening very serious consequences, broke out between that general and Palafox, who retired with the Arragonese levies towards Saragossa. Meanwhile Blake, whose forces, from the junction of the troops under Romana, which had come up from Corunna, and the Asturians, with whom he was in communication near Santander, were increased to nearly fifty thousand men, commenced a forward movement on the French left in the Biscayan provinces, and, stretching himself out by the sea-coast, and up the valley of Durango, threatened to interpose between the advanced divisions of Lefebvre and Ney's corps, which lay most exposed, and their communication with the French frontier on the Bidassoa.²

² Tor. ii. 110,
113. Nap. i.
368.

21.
Defeat of
Blake at
Tornosa.

This offensive movement was well conceived, and, if conducted and followed up with the requisite vigour, might have led to great results. As it was, however, his forces were so scattered, that though thirty-six thousand were under his immediate orders, only seventeen thou-

sand were collected by Blake in front of the enemy, without any artillery, in the valley of Durango; the remainder being stretched inactive along the sea-coast, or separated from the main body by impassable mountain ridges. Alarmed, however, by the probable consequence of the interposition of such a force between the bulk of his troops and their communications with Bayonne and San Sebastian, Lefebvre resolved to make a general attack upon the enemy, and drive them back to the neighbourhood of Bilboa. Descending from the heights of Durango, under cover of a thick fog, he suddenly attacked the Spanish army at daybreak on the 31st October, with such vigour, that the divisions in front were thrown back on those in the rear, and the whole driven in utter confusion to Bilboa, from whence they continued their retreat in the night to Balmaseda, in the direction of the Asturias. Lefebvre followed them next day; but Blake having assembled his troops, turned upon his pursuers, and, after some sharp partial engagements, the French retired to Bilboa, of which they were allowed to retain undisturbed possession.¹

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

Oct. 31.

¹ Tor. ii. 120
123. Nap. i.
379, 381.

Matters were in this state in Navarre and Biscay, when Napoleon arrived at Vittoria, and instantly, as if by an electric shock, communicated his own unequalled energy to the operations of the army. Disapproving of Lefebvre's unsupported attack upon Blake, which promised merely to force him back from the scene of action, without effecting those decisive results which his presence usually occasioned and which he at present required, he instantly gave orders for the most vigorous operations. The position of the allied armies promised the greatest results to immediate attack. Blake, with twenty-five thousand defeated and starving mountaineers, was near Espinosa in Biscay; the Conde de Belvidere, with the Estremaduran levies, twelve thousand strong, was in Burgos; Castanos and Palafox, little dreaming of the danger which was approaching, were preparing to advance again towards Logrono, and confidently expected to drive the invaders over the Pyrenees; while the English forces, slowly converging towards the scene of action, were still scattered, from Corunna to Madrid, over the half of Spain.² Napoleon, on the other hand, had a hundred thousand excellent troops

22.
Position of
the French
and Spanish
armies on
Napoleon's
arrival.

² Nap. i. 385,
387. Tor. ii.
124, 125.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

ready for immediate operations, within a circumference of twenty miles round his headquarters at Vittoria, besides nearly an equal force at a greater distance in Biscay and Navarre.

23.
Actions at
Espinosa.
Nov. 10.

The plans of the French Emperor were immediately formed. Blake, whose eyes were at length opened to the perilous situation in which he was placed, so far in advance, and cut off from all communication with the other Spanish armies, had retired to ESPINOSA, where he had concentrated nearly all his troops, including those which had come with Romana from the Baltic, in a very strong position; while his reserves and park of artillery were stationed in the rear at Reynosa. He had now rejoined his artillery and reserve parks, and had collected twenty-five thousand men; but his troops, half-naked and in great part without shoes, were shivering from the inclemency of the weather, and exhausted by incessant marching and counter-marching, often without food, for fourteen days. In this state they were attacked on the forenoon of the 10th by Marshal Victor with twenty-five thousand men, while Lefebvre, with fifteen thousand, marched upon the Spanish line of retreat. Romana's infantry, posted in a wood on the right, made a gallant resistance, and not only was the action prolonged till nightfall, without any disadvantage, by those steady veterans, but the Spanish centre, who were protected by the fire of a battery well posted, to which the French had no guns to oppose, had gained ground upon the enemy. Next morning, however, the result was very different. Victor, who had changed his columns of attack during the night, renewed the action at daybreak, and directed his efforts against the left, where the Asturian levies were posted. These gallant mountaineers, though almost starving, and but recently embodied, stood their ground bravely as long as their chiefs, Quiron, Acevedo, and Valdes, remained to head them. But the French, perceiving the influence which they exercised over the minds of their followers, sent forward some sharpshooters under cover of the rocks and thickets in front of the position, who speedily killed the first and severely wounded the two latter.¹

Nov. 11.

¹ Jom. ii. 97.
98. Nap. i.
391, 392.
Tor. i. 126,
130.

Disheartened by this loss, the Asturians broke and fled.

Blake detached a column of grenadiers to support them, but instead of doing so, they were themselves overwhelmed by the torrent of fugitives, and swept along; in a short time the whole army disbanded, and rushed in the wildest disorder towards the river Trueba, which encircles the rear of the position.* Great numbers perished in the stream, which was deeply swollen with the rains of winter; those who reached the fords dispersed, and made the best of their way into their own provinces, carrying dismay into all parts of Galicia, Asturias, and Leon, where Romana afterwards contrived to rally ten thousand men. With difficulty Blake collected seven thousand men, with whom he fell back to Reynosa, where he endeavoured to make a stand, with the aid of his reserve artillery which was still stationed there: but this ineffectual attempt only rendered his defeat in the end more complete. Soult, who, as well as Lefebvre, was now upon his traces, despatched a large body of troops on the 10th, to cut him off from his retreat towards Leon: and upon the 13th he was attacked by the advanced guard of the former marshal, who displayed even more than his wonted vigour on the occasion, completely routed, with the loss of his whole artillery and ammunition, and driven, with a few thousand miserable and spectre-looking followers, into the heart of the Asturian mountains. Meanwhile, Bilboa, Santander, and the whole line of the intermediate sea-coast, with great stores landed at the latter port by the British, fell into the hands of the enemy.¹

While these decisive blows in a manner annihilated the Spanish right, an equally important stroke was delivered by Soult, who had now taken the command of the second corps, against the centre. It consisted of the army of Estremadura, under the Count de Belvidere, with which were united some of the bravest regular troops in Spain; in particular, the Spanish and Walloon Guards, two of the best appointed regiments of the line, and the Royal Carabineers; and the whole were completely equipped and clothed by the English government.

* Great part of the disasters of this defeat were owing to the injudicious selection of a position for battle with a river in the rear—another example, like that of the Russians at Friedland, of one of the most fatal errors which a general can commit.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

24.

Total defeat
of the Spaniards at Reynosa.
Nov. 13.

¹ Tor. ii. 126,
135. Nap. i.
391, 393.
Jom. ii. 97,
98. South.
ii. 389, 393.

25.

Battle of
Burgos, and
defeat of the
Spanish
centre.
Nov. 10.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

It made, however, even less resistance than the undisciplined levies of Asturias and Galicia. The Spanish soldiers, eighteen thousand strong, of whom eleven thousand were regulars, were posted at Gamonal, in front of Burgos, with twenty pieces of cannon disposed along their front; the right occupied a wood, the left the walled park of Villemer. The action commenced by General Lasalle, with the French horse, driving in the Spanish right, and threatening its flank, while Mouton, with a division of veterans, charged rapidly through the trees, and assailed their front; Bonnet followed closely with another division immediately in his rear. But such was the vigour and effect of Mouton's attack, that before his support came up the enemy broke and fled in utter confusion towards Burgos, pursued all the way by Bessières' heavy dragoons, who did dreadful execution among the fugitives, and took all the guns which had been saved from the first attack. Don Juan de Henes-trosa, who commanded the Spanish cavalry, to cover the retreat, charged this dreadful body of horse with more gallantry than success; his dragoons, led by youths of the best families in Spain, were unable to withstand the shock of the French cuirassiers, and shared in the general rout. Two thousand Spaniards fell on the field, or in the pursuit; all the artillery, consisting of twenty guns, with eight hundred prisoners, fell into the hands of the victors. The whole ammunition and stores of the army were taken in Burgos, which was given up to pillage, and the dispersion of the defeated troops was complete.¹

¹ Nap. i. 389,
390. Jom. ii.
96. Tor. ii.
131, 132.
South. ii.
395, 396.

26.
Movement
against Cas-
tanos and
Palafox.

Burgos now became the centre of the Emperor's operations: headquarters were established there on the 12th, and ten thousand light troops were despatched forward to scour the country, levy contributions, and diffuse a general terror of the French arms. Such was the consternation produced by their advance, that they traversed the open fields in every direction, without experiencing the slightest opposition. They swept over the plains of Leon as far as Benevente, Toro, and Tordesillas, spreading every where the triumphant proclamations of the Emperor, and boasting that, notwithstanding their utmost exertions, the French horsemen could not overtake the English army, which, abandoning its allies without striking a blow, was

flying in disgrace to its ships. But while, by these incur-
sions, the attention of the enemy was drawn to the side
of Salamanca, the eyes of Napoleon were, in reality,
turned in a different quarter; and it was against Castanos
and Palafox that the weight of his forces was directed.
The position of the French army seemed to expose them
to certain destruction; for Ney's corps, which had been
destined to act against the army of Estremadura at Bur-
gos, being rendered disposable by its sudden destruction,
was in a situation to make a circuit round their position,
and cut them off from the line of retreat to New Castile
and Madrid. That brave marshal, accordingly, reinforced
by a division from the reserve, was directed to move from
Aranda by Soria to Agreda, which was directly in their
rear; while Lannes was despatched from Burgos, with
two divisions of infantry and one of heavy cavalry from
the reserve, to put himself at the head of Moncey's corps,
and attack them in front.* Meanwhile, Castanos, finding
himself separated both from Belvidere and Blake's armies,
with the destruction of which he was unacquainted, had
adopted the extraordinary plan of forcing a passage
through the French forces in his front, and marching by
Concha-de-Hara and Soria to Burgos, where he was to
annihilate the Emperor's reserves and rearguard, and
thence pass on to Vittoria to co-operate with Blake in the
destruction of the two corps in Biscay.¹

Nov. 21.
¹ Thib. vii.
160, 161.
Tor. ii. 138,
139. Nap. i.
395, 401.

In the midst of these extravagant projects, the hand of
fate was upon him. Marshal Ney, who left Aranda on
the 19th, entered Soria on the 21st, upon which Castanos
retreated towards TUDELA, which he reached on the even-
ing of the 22d. There his army formed a junction with
that of Arragon under Palafox, and their united forces
amounted to thirty-nine thousand infantry, and four
thousand cavalry, with forty guns. The generals of the
armies of Andalusia and Arragon could not concur in any
plan of common operations; Palafox contending strongly
for the defence of Arragon, Castanos for the more pru-
dent plan of retiring before the enemy. Nothing was as

27.
Positions of
the French
and Spanish
armies
before the
battle of
Tudela.

* In crossing a mountain range near Tolosa, the horse of Marshal Lannes fell with him, and he sustained several severe and dangerous bruises. He was cured in a very singular manner by being wrapped in a warm skin of a newly slain sheep, and was able in two days to resume the command of the army.—LARRY, *Mémoires et Camp.* iv. 237.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

yet decided between these conflicting opinions, when it was announced from the outposts that the enemy were already upon them. In haste, the troops were drawn up nearly on the ground which they occupied at the moment, which was along a range of inconsiderable hills, nearly six miles long, stretching from Tudela to Tarazona. The Arragonese, with Palafox, were on the right, leaning on Tudela; the Valencians and Castilians loosely scattered in the centre; the veterans of Andalusia, proud of the laurels of Baylen, on the left, stretching to Tarazona, which they occupied with three divisions, the flower of the army. Lannes, who commanded the French, and had concentrated thirty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, with sixty pieces of cannon, instantly perceived the weakness of the enemy's line, and prepared to pierce the long and feebly guarded front in the centre, where it was weakest, and composed of the most inexperienced troops, so as to separate altogether the army of Arragon from that of Andalusia.¹

¹ Tor. ii. 138,
140. Jom.
ii. 98, 99.
Nap. i. 401,
404.

28.
Total defeat
of the
Spaniards.

This well-conceived plan proved entirely successful. General Maurice Mathieu, with a strong body of infantry, and the whole cavalry under Lefebvre Desnouettes, attacked the Valencians and Castilians in the centre with great vigour, and soon compelled them to give ground. But they were in their turn charged by the Spanish Guards, whom Castanos despatched to their assistance from the left, who threw the assailants into confusion; and the Spanish line in that quarter was gaining ground, when they were taken in flank by General Morlot, who had beaten back the Arragonese on the right, and now turned fiercely upon the enemy's centre. Aided by such powerful auxiliaries, Maurice Mathieu and Lefebvre Desnouettes regained the advantage, and, in their turn, drove back and threw into confusion the Valencians and Castilians, who had fallen into disorder from the length of the combat. The centre was speedily routed, and Lefebvre, charging the right with vigour, drove them entirely off the field in confusion towards Saragossa. Meanwhile, La Pena with the victors of Baylen, on the extreme left, had routed the French under La Grange, by whom he was opposed; but when following up their success in some disorder, and already confident of victory, the vic-

tors were suddenly met and broken by a solid mass of infantry which diverged from the victorious centre of the enemy. The other divisions of the army of Andalusia, three in number, and embracing twelve thousand soldiers, took no part in the action. They commenced their retreat, however, in good order, when it was evident the battle was lost; but some of the advanced troops of Ney's corps having appeared in the rear, from the side of Soria, and a powder-waggon exploded by accident, the retreat became disorderly, and it was with some difficulty the guns were brought off. As it was, the separation of the Spanish armies was complete; fifteen thousand men, Arragonese, Valencians, and Castilians, had taken refuge in Saragossa, without either guns or ammunition-waggons. Twenty thousand, under Castanos, with all their artillery, fell back, comparatively in good order, to Calatayud, and were immediately ordered up by the Central Junta to Madrid to defend the capital. Five thousand were killed and wounded, or made prisoners on the field; the remainder, with twenty guns, dispersed in the pursuit, and were never more heard of. But if Napoleon's directions had been implicitly followed by Ney, who arrived at Soria on the 22d, and if, instead of remaining in that town, as he did, inactive for two days, he had advanced in the direction of Calatayud, he would have fallen perpendicularly on the retreating columns of Castanos, and totally destroyed them. This failure on the part of Ney, excited great displeasure in Napoleon, (who had with reason calculated upon much greater results from the battle,) and was attended with important consequences on the future fortunes of the war.¹*

The battles of Espinosa, Burgos, and Tudela, were not only totally destructive of the Spanish armies in the north, but they rendered, by the dispersion of their forces

* Colonel Napier says, "Palafox, with the right wing and centre, fled to Saragossa with such speed, that some of the fugitives are said to have arrived there the same evening." It would be desirable that the authority on which this serious charge is made against Palafox should be given, as no foundation appears for it in the military authorities with which I am acquainted. Jomini says merely, that after the battle "Palafox took the road to Saragossa;" Toreno, "that Don Joseph Palafox in the morning (*des le matin*) resumed the route to Saragossa." Neither say any thing about any of the Arragonese or Palafox himself having either fled to Saragossa, or arrived there at night.—See NAPIER, i. 403, 1st Ed.; TORENO, ii. 141; JOMINI, iii. 100.

¹ Jom. ii. 99,
100. Tor. ii.
138, 142.
Nap. i. 401,
406. South.
ii. 399, 401.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

29.
Disorderly
and eccentric
retreat of the
Spanish
armies from
the Ebro.

with which they were attended, the approach to the capital a matter of ease to the French Emperor. Blake's troops, of which Romana had now assumed the command, had almost all dispersed, some into Asturias, others into Leon: and it was with the utmost difficulty that that gallant commander had rallied ten thousand of the starving fugitives, without either artillery, ammunition, or stores, in the rugged mountains from which the Ebro takes its rise; the remnant of the army of Estremadura, routed at Burgos, had fallen back, in the utmost confusion, towards the Guadarrama mountains; while Castanos, with the army of Andalusia, was driven off in a south-easterly direction to Calatayud, in the road to Valencia; and Palafox, with the levies of Arragon and Castile, had sought refuge behind the walls of Saragossa. Thus, the Spanish armies were not only individually and grievously weakened by the losses they had sustained, but so disjointed and severed, as to be incapable of acting in concert, or affording any support to each other; while Napoleon, at the head of a hundred thousand men, occupied a central position in the heart of them all, and was master of the great road leading direct to the capital.¹

¹ Nap. i. 405,
406. Jom. ii.
102. Tor. ii.
141.

30.
Rapid and
concentrated
advance of
the French
armies to
Madrid.

It was in such circumstances that the genius of that great general, which never shone with such lustre as in the vigour and ability with which he followed up a beaten enemy, appeared most conspicuous. Abandoning the remains of Blake's army to Soult, and the care of watching the English troops to Lefebvre's corps, and directing Jannes to observe Saragossa and the discomfited but warlike multitude which it contained, while Ney was to press incessantly on Castanos, and drive him off, as far as possible, in an easterly direction, the Emperor himself, with the Imperial Guards, Victor's corps, and the reserve, at least sixty thousand strong, advanced towards Madrid. So skilfully were these various movements combined, that while each corps had the following up and destroying of its own peculiar antagonist in an especial manner intrusted to its care, the whole combined to protect and support the advance of the main body to the capital;² Lefebvre covering its right flank,

² Nap. i. 407.
Jom. i. 401,
102. Tor. ii.
143, 144.

Ney *its* left, while Lannes and Soult secured and protected the rear, at the same time that they disposed of the remains of the Arragonese and Galician armies.

Departing from Aranda de Douro on the 28th, the Emperor arrived at the foot of the Somo-sierra on the morning of the 30th. Some field-works, hastily constructed at the summit of the pass, were garrisoned by a disorderly crowd, composed of the reserve of the divisions of Andalusia which had been sent forward from Madrid, with which were united the remains of the army of Estremadura, in all about twelve thousand men, with sixteen pieces of cannon, under the command of General St Juan. The guns swept the road along the whole ascent, which was long and very steep; and as it was inevitable that a very considerable time must be occupied by the troops in surmounting the toilsome ascent, a very serious loss was anticipated by the assailants. Preceded, however, by a cloud of sharpshooters, who covered the mountains on either side, a column of three regiments ascended the causeway, while as many assailed the position on its right, and a like number on its left. The fire, however, of the artillery on the summit was very violent, to which it was difficult to reply, as a thick fog, intermingled with smoke, hung over their line on the higher part of the ridge, on entering into which the French found themselves torn by a descending shower of balls from an enemy whom they could not discern. The head of the column on the causeway was already arrested, and hesitation, as always ensues in such an event, was beginning to spread in the rear, when Napoleon, having rode to the bottom of the pass, at once ordered the Polish lancers and chasseurs of the Guard, under General Montbrun, to charge. Advancing up the steep ascent at a rapid pace, these brave men opened a way for themselves through the columns of infantry with which it was encumbered, and attacked the battery: the first squadrons, shattered by a terrible discharge, reeled and fell back; but the next, galloping forward before the guns could be reloaded, dashed among the artillerymen, and carried the pieces. Meanwhile the Spanish infantry, stationed on either flank, retired, after discharging their muskets at the swarms of tirailleurs by whom they were assailed,¹ and

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

31.
Forcing of
the Somo-
sierra pass.

¹ Top. ii. 145.
Nap. i.
409. Jom. ii.
103.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

32.
Prodigious
agitation at
Madrid.

the whole body, falling into confusion, soon fled in disorder to Segovia, where a small number only could be rallied by the efforts of their gallant leader, San Juan, who cut his way, sword in hand, through a body of Polish lancers by whom he was enveloped.

Great was the dismay in the Spanish capital when the alarming intelligence arrived, early on the morning of the 1st December, that the Somo-sierra pass had been forced, and that Napoleon with his terrible legions was advancing with rapid strides against its defenceless walls. The Central Junta at Aranjuez, at the same time, heard of the disaster, and instantly fixing on Badajos as their point of union, they set out with all imaginable haste for Talavera de la Reyna in different parties and by different roads, and were fortunate enough to arrive at their place of destination without accident. Meanwhile, the general government of Madrid was intrusted to a Provisional Junta, of which the Duke del Infantado was the head; while the direction of its military defence was in the hands of Don Thomas de Morla, who had early taken a lead in the Cadiz insurrection, but whose subsequent violation of faith to the prisoners taken at Baylen augured ill for the integrity with which he would discharge the arduous duties now intrusted to his care. The troops in the city consisted only of three hundred regular soldiers, with two battalions and a single squadron newly levied. Nevertheless, vigorous preparations were made for defence. Eight thousand muskets, and a still greater number of pikes, were hastily distributed from the arsenal to the people; heavy cannon were planted on the Retiro and principal streets; the pavement was torn up, barricades were constructed, and the most enthusiastic spirit pervaded the multitude. Ammunition was served out in abundance: but some of the cartridges were discovered to be filled with black sand instead of gunpowder—a discovery which, in the excited state of the inhabitants, proved fatal to the Marquis Perales, who was at the head of that department. He had formerly been the idol of the people;¹ but, with their usual inconstancy, upon the first discovery of this fraud, originating probably in the cupidity of some inferior agent, a furious mob assailed his

¹ South. ii.
409, 412.
Nap. i. 411,
414. Tor. ii.
149, 150.

house, dragged him into the street, and there murdered him.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

On the morning of the 2d, the advanced guards of the French arrived on the heights to the north of Madrid; and the Emperor, who was extremely desirous of gaining possession of the capital on the anniversary of his coronation, and of the battle of Austerlitz, immediately summoned it to surrender; but the proposal was indignantly rejected. On the same day the Duke del Infantado was fortunate enough to make his escape, under cover of a thick fog, and directed his steps to Guadalaxara, to join the army of Castanos, which had retreated in that direction. During the night the French infantry arrived in great strength around the capital, and on the following morning a thick fog overspread both the agitated multitude within, and the host without by which it was menaced. By degrees, however, the mist was dispelled by the rays of the ascending sun, and the Emperor directed his columns of attack against the RETIRO, the heights of which completely commanded the city. A battery of thirty guns speedily made a practicable breach in its weak defences, and a French division advancing to the assault, soon after rushed in and made themselves masters of that important post. The agitation in Madrid now became excessive; twenty thousand armed men were within its walls, agitated by furious passions, burning with individual ardour, but destitute of the organisation and discipline necessary for success against the formidable enemy by whom they were now assailed. The city presented the most frightful scene of disorder. Exasperated crowds filled the streets; strong barricades were erected in various quarters; the bells of two hundred churches rang together; a confused murmur, like the sound of a mighty cataract, was heard incessantly, even during the night, which was audible at the distance of miles from the capital. In the French lines, on the other hand, all was silent and orderly, and the step only of the passing sentinel broke the stillness; — a striking image of the difference between the disorderly passions which agitate the populace, without being directed by superior intelligence to any useful end,¹ and

33.
Capture of
the Retiro. •
Dec. 2.

Dec. 3.

¹ Tor. ii. 149,
152. Nap. i.
411, 415.
South. ii. 410,
414. Jom. ii.
103.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

34.
•Capitulation
of Madrid.

the experienced discipline which restrains an ardour not less powerful, till the moment for letting it loose with decisive effect has arrived.

But the possession of the Retiro, in a military point of view, is possession of Madrid; bombs from its heights can reach the farthest points of the city. Sensible of the impossibility of maintaining the defence, the Spanish authorities were deliberating on the expedience of proposing terms of capitulation, when a flag of truce arrived from Berthier, threatening the utmost severity of military execution if the signal of submission was not hoisted within two hours. Morla and Ivriarte were upon that despatched to the headquarters of the Emperor, to negotiate the terms of surrender. He received the former with unusual sternness, and in just but cutting terms reproached him with his violation of good faith towards the unhappy prisoners taken at Baylen.* "Injustice and bad faith,"

* When Morla appeared before him, Napoleon addressed him in these words: "You in vain seek to shelter yourself under the name of the people; if you cannot now appease them, it is because you have formerly excited and misled them by your falsehoods; return to Madrid, assemble the clergy, the magistrates, the principal inhabitants; tell them, that if by to-morrow morning at six o'clock the town has not surrendered, it will cease to exist. I neither will nor ought to withdraw my troops. You have massacred the unhappy French prisoners who fell into your hands: within these few days you have suffered two servants of the Russian ambassador to be dragged into the streets and murdered, because they were born in France. The unskilfulness and cowardice of a general had placed in your hands troops who had capitulated on the field of battle, and the capitulation was violated. What sort of a letter did you, M. Morla, write to the general who subscribed that capitulation? † It well became you to speak of pillage—you, who in Roussillon had carried off women, and divided them like booty among your soldiers. What right, besides, had you to hold such language? The capitulation expressly forbade it. What have the English done, who are far from piquing themselves on being strict observers of the law of nations? they complained of the Convention of Cintra, but nevertheless carried it into execution. To violate military conventions is to renounce civilisation and put ourselves on a level with the Bedouins of the Desert. How can you now venture to demand a capitulation, you who have violated that of Baylen? See how injustice and bad faith ever recoil upon those who commit them. I had a fleet at Cadiz; it had come there as to an ally's harbour; and you directed against it the mortars of the town which you commanded. I had a Spanish army in my ranks, but I preferred allowing it to escape on board the English vessels, and precipitating it from the rocks of Espinosa, to disarming it. I would rather have seven thousand additional enemies to combat than be wanting in good faith. Return to Madrid; I give you till to-morrow at ten: return then if you are the bearer of submission; if not, you and your troops shall be all put to the sword."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 165, 166. There can be no doubt that consciousness of his former breach of faith now paralysed Morla, and impelled him into a second act of pusillanimity, if not treachery, to his own countrymen; so true it is, in Napoleon's words, that "*injustice and bad faith ever recoil in the end upon those who commit them.*" Morla lingered out a few years, abhorred and shunned by all; he died as he had lived, devoured by remorse and sunk in misery.—See TORENO, ii. 155.

† Alluding to Morla's letter to Dupont of 10th August 1808, in which he sought to vindicate the violation of the capitulation on the ground of the atrocities of which the French soldiers had been guilty

said he, "ever in the end recoil upon those who commit them." Prophetic words! of the truth and universal application of which Napoleon himself, on the rock of St Helena, afterwards afforded a memorable example. Filled with consternation at the perilous predicament in which he was individually placed, from the well-founded resentment of the Emperor, and inspired with a sense of the necessity of appeasing the wrath of the conqueror by an immediate surrender, Morla returned to the city, and easily persuaded the majority of the junta that submission had become a matter of necessity. A few gallant men, with the Marquis Castellas and Viscount de Gaeta, disdaining to surrender, withdrew from the city during the night, and took the road for Estremadura. At daybreak the capitulation was signed, and by ten o'clock the principal points of the city were in the possession of the French troops.¹

Napoleon did not himself enter Madrid, but established his headquarters at Chamartin, in the neighbourhood of the capital, where he received the submission of the authorities, and fulminated his anathemas against the functionaries who had resisted or swerved from his government. In a short time every thing wore the appearance of peace: the theatres were reopened; the shopkeepers displayed their tempting wares, secure in the discipline of the conquerors; the Prado and public walks were crowded with spectators. Numerous deputations, embracing some of the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of Madrid, waited on the Emperor, and renewed their protestations of fidelity to his brother Joseph, who was established at the royal palace of Pardo: it then appeared how completely and fatally the corruptions and enjoyments of opulence and civilised life disqualify men from acting a heroic part in defence of their country.* Measures of great severity were adopted against all the constituted authorities who, after having recognised Joseph as King of Spain, had joined the popular party. The Marquis de Simon, a Frenchman by birth, who had to the last prolonged the conflict after the capitulation had paralysed all general resistance, and

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

Dec. 4.

¹ Tor. ii. 152,
155. Thib.
vii. 163, 165.
Nap. i. 413,
415. South.
ii. 414, 417.

35.

Napoleon's
measures for
the tranquil-
lising of
Spain.

* Their number amounted to above *twelve hundred*, comprehending the most eminent and wealthy individuals of all classes in the metropolis.—Jom. iii. 105.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

Dec. 4.

Dec. 7.

¹ Thib. vii.
168, 170.Tor. ii. 156,
158. South.
ii. 419, 420.

was taken fighting bravely, when endeavouring to cut his way through at the gate of Fuencarral, was ordered to be shot. He owed his life to the intercession of his daughter, who threw herself at the Emperor's feet, and obtained from his clemency a commutation of the sentence. All the members of the Council of Castile who had declared that they had sworn allegiance to Joseph under jesuitical mental reservations, were dismissed, and ordered to be detained prisoners in their own houses. Nor were general measures wanting, calculated to reconcile the nation to the sway of the intrusive monarch. By a solemn decree, the Inquisition was abolished, and all its funds directed to be applied towards the reduction of the public debt; feudal rights were suppressed; all personal restrictions and privileges declared at an end; the number of convents throughout the kingdom was at once reduced a third, and their inmates were turned adrift, while all novices were permitted to leave their places of seclusion. One-half of the proceeds of the estates of the suppressed convents was to be applied to the public debt, the other to the relief of the cities and towns which had suffered from the French invasion; and all the barriers between province and province, which had so long impeded the internal commerce of the kingdom, were declared at an end. A few days after, the Emperor fulminated a bulletin against the English government, which deserves to be recorded, from the singular contrast which its predictions exhibited to the future march of events with which his own destinies were so deeply interwoven.¹*

Nor was the Emperor less actively employed during the fortnight that he remained at Madrid, in dispersing his armies so as to spread them over the greatest possible space, and complete in all the provinces that thorough conquest which had already been effected in the capital.

* ——— “As to the English armies, *I will chase them from the Peninsula*. Saragossa, Valencia, Seville, shall be reduced to subjection, either by persuasion or force of arms; there is no longer any obstacle which can long retard the execution of my wishes. *The Bourbons can never again reign in Europe*; the divisions in the royal family have been fomented by the English. It was not the old King Charles or his favourite whom the Duke del Infantado, the instrument of England, wished to overturn from the throne; his papers recently taken prove what the real object was; it was British preponderance which they wished to establish in Spain. Insensate project! which could have led to no other result but a war without end, and the shedding of oceans of blood. No power

Ney's corps, which had been brought up from Soria, was stationed at Madrid, under his own immediate control, with the Guards and reserve; Victor was advanced to Toledo, which, notwithstanding its expressed determination to hold out to the uttermost, opened its gates on the first summons; while his light cavalry scoured the plains of La Mancha, carrying devastation and terror to the foot of the Sierra Morena. Lefebvre advanced to Talavera, on the great road for Badajoz and Elvas; Soult was reposing on the banks of the Carrion, preparing to follow the broken remains of Romana's army into the fastnesses of Galicia; Junot's corps was broken up, and the divisions composing it incorporated with Soult's troops; Moncey was ordered up to Madrid for an expedition against Valencia; while Mortier was directed to advance to support his corps, which was occupied with the siege of Saragossa. Thus the Emperor, from his central position at Madrid, was preparing expeditions to subdue the insurrection at once in Andalusia, Estremadura, Galicia, Valencia, and Arragon; governed in these measures by his favourite maxim, which had been acted upon with such fatal effect against the Prussians after the battle of Jena, that the true secret of war is to concentrate when a decisive blow is to be struck, but to disperse when the broken remains of the enemy are to be pursued, and the moral effect of victory is to be magnified by the numerous minor successes by which it is followed.

Vast as such a plan of operations undoubtedly was, it was not disproportioned to the resources of the Emperor; for the imperial muster-rolls, on October 10th, showed in the Peninsula the enormous number of three hundred and thirty thousand men and sixty thousand horse, of whom no less than two hundred and fifty thousand were

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

36.
Positions of
the French
corps in the
end of De-
cember.

37.
Vast forces at
the disposal
of the Em-
peror.

Influenced by England can exist on the Continent; if there are any which desire it, their wish is insensate, and will sooner or later cause their ruin. If you swear allegiance to my brother with sincerity and truth, without equivocation or mental reservation, I will relinquish all the rights which conquest has now afforded me, and make it my first object to conduct myself towards you as a faithful friend. The present generation may differ in opinion; too many passions have been brought into action; but your grandchildren will bless me as their regenerator; they will place among their memorable days that in which I appeared among them, and from those days will date the future prosperity of Spain."—*NAPOLEON'S Proclamation to the Spaniards, December 7, 1808; JOMINI, iii. 108, 110.*

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

¹ Imperial
Muster-Rolls,
Nap. i. App.
28.

² Nap. i. 421,
422. Jom. iii.
104. Tor. ii.
166, 172.

38.
Bold advance
of Sir John
Moore.

present with the eagles and with their regiments, and the losses since sustained had been more than counterbalanced by the reinforcements received ; so that, after making every allowance for the troops requisite for garrisons and communications, at least a hundred and sixty thousand were disposable for active operations, or above thirty thousand men could be directed against each of the provinces menaced with an attack.¹ * The disorganised condition of the Spanish armies, the deplorable state of destitution to which they were reduced, the vast distance which separated them from each other, and the want of any efficient central government to combine their operations, rendered it too probable that this vigorous and unrelenting system of conquest would be attended with the desired effect. There was every reason to fear that the national resistance of the Spaniards would, in the first moments of consternation consequent on their disasters, be speedily suppressed in all the provinces ; when the career of victory was arrested from a quarter whence it was least expected, and by an enemy who had been hitherto almost forgotten, from the mistaken view which the Emperor entertained of their prowess.¹

While these disasters were accumulating on the Spanish monarchy, the English army, unobserved and unassailed, had at length been concentrating its forces. Baird had come up from Corunna, Hope from the Escorial ; and Sir John Moore found himself at the head of nearly thirty thousand men, of whom above two thousand were cavalry in admirable condition, and sixty pieces of cannon.† The English general was for long extremely perplexed what to do, in consequence of the imperfect information which he received, and the contradictory nature of the plans advocated to him on the one hand by Mr Frere, the British ambassador at Madrid, who strongly urged an immediate advance to the capital, and the evidence which the progress of events around him was daily affording

* Eight corps, as on p. 147,	319,690
Of whom were present under arms,	247,834
Horses,	56,567
Detached,	32,536
In hospital,	37,419

—See *Imperial Muster-Rolls*; NAPIER, i. p. 88, App.

† The British army, however, had its full proportion of that usual drawback upon all armies, the difference between the actual numbers appearing on the

of the utter incapacity of the Spanish troops to contend with the formidable legions of Napoleon. At one time the intelligence of the successive rout of all the Spanish armies appeared so alarming, that orders were given to the troops to retreat, and Sir David Baird's heavy baggage, which was coming up from Lugo to Astorga, commenced a retrograde movement to the latter place. This determination excited the utmost dissatisfaction among the troops; officers and men loudly and openly murmured against such a resolution, and declared it would be better to sacrifice half the army than retire from so fair a field without striking a blow for the allies who had staked their all in the common cause. The gallant spirit of the general himself secretly recoiled from the mournful resolution, which nothing had made him adopt but an imperious sense of duty to the troops intrusted to his care, the gloomy forebodings consequent on the overwhelming strength of the enemy, and the defeat and dispersion of all the Spanish forces who had attempted to arrest his progress.¹

These feelings, both in the general and the soldiers, were wrought up to the highest degree when intelligence was received, shortly after the advance of the French to Madrid, of the enthusiastic preparations made for the defence of the capital, and the determination of the inhabitants to bury themselves under its ruins rather than submit to the invader. Giving vent joyfully to the native courage of his disposition, as well as the loudly expressed wishes of the army, Sir John Moore now sent orders to Sir David Baird to suspend his retreat, and, to the infinite joy of the troops, directions were given, indicating a dis-

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

Nov. 29.

¹ Lond. i.
217, 220.
Tor. i. 178.
Nap. i. 435,
440.

39.
Determina-
tion of Moore
to advance,
and joy which
it diffused
through the
army.

Dec. 5.

Dec. 9.

muster-rolls, and the efficient force that could really be brought into the field. The following is the state of the British army from the Adjutant-general's state, 19th December 1808:—

Fit for Duty.	In Hospital.	Detached.	Total.
Cavalry, . . . 2,278	182	794	3,254
Infantry, . . .	3,786	893	26,871
Artillery, . . . 1,358	97	—	1,455
25,858	4,035	1,687	31,583

2,275 were left in Portugal, or were on the march between Lugo and Villa-Franca, and must be deducted from this number.—See *NAPIER*, i. 83, *App.*

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

Dec. 11

¹ Nap. i. 435,
451. Lond. i.
217, 233.
Moore's
Camp. in
Spain, 187,
194. Tor. i.
178, 182.

position to advance. These preparations were not relaxed, although Colonel Graham, the future hero of Barossa, returned on the 9th with the disheartening intelligence of the capture of the Retiro, and perilous situation of Madrid. The British general knew that his countrymen looked to him for some great exploit; and, though fully aware of the danger of such a step, he resolved to throw himself upon the enemy's communications, and menace Soult, who, with fifteen thousand men, lay exposed to his blows in the valley of the Carrion. The gallant resolution was no sooner taken than it was acted upon; two days after the British army, completely concentrated, commenced its advance, and Moore, with twenty-five thousand men around his banners, ventured to essay it against Napoleon, who had two hundred thousand under his command.¹

40.

Advance to
Sahagun, on
the French
line of com-
munication.

The forward march of the English forces, however, was combined, as prudence, and indeed necessity, dictated, with preparations for a retreat; and as it was uncertain which line would be adopted, magazines were formed both on the great road to Lisbon and at Benevente, Astorga, and Lugo, in the direction of Galicia. On the 13th, head-quarters reached Relaejos, and the advanced posts of cavalry extended to Rueda, at which place they surprised a French post and made eighty prisoners. Great was the astonishment of these haughty conquerors at finding themselves thus assailed by an enemy, whom the boastful proclamations of the Emperor had led them to believe to be in full retreat for his ships.

Dec. 14.

At first Sir John's march was directed towards Valladolid, in order to facilitate the junction with Baird's corps; but an intercepted despatch from Napoleon on the 14th having made him acquainted with the fall of Madrid, and the unsuspecting security in which Soult's corps lay in the valley of the Carrion, the columns were moved towards Toro and Benevente, and Valderas was assigned as the point of junction for the two armies.²

Dec. 16.

² Nap. i. 450,
454. Tor. ii.
177, 182.
Lond. i. 212.

41.

Preparations
for attacking
Soult on the
Carrion.

At Toro, where headquarters were on the 16th, information was received that Romana, who had been informed of the movement and invited to co-operate in it, instead of doing so, was, in consequence of the retrograde movement of Sir David Baird a few days before, in full retreat.

towards the Galician mountains: the truth was, his troops, from hunger, fatigue, and misery, had dwindled away to eight thousand ragged and disheartened fugitives, totally unfit to take the field with regular forces, and whom he was even ashamed to array by their side. Notwithstanding this disappointment, the English forces continued to advance; on the 20th, the junction between Sir David Baird and Sir John Moore was fully effected at Moyorga; and on the 21st, the united forces were established at Sahagun, near which town Lord Paget, afterwards Marquis of Anglesea, at the head of the 10th and 15th hussars, not above four hundred strong, fell in with, and after a short but brilliant action, totally defeated a body of seven hundred French cavalry, making two colonels and one hundred and sixty men prisoners in twenty minutes. Soult, now seriously alarmed, hastily called in his detachments from all quarters, and with some difficulty concentrated eighteen thousand men on the banks of the Carrion and between that and Saldana, where Moore was making preparations for attacking him on the 23d.¹

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

Dec. 20.

Dec. 21.

¹ Tor. ii. 178,
187. Nap. i.
450, 461.
Lond. i. 212,
243.

Never was more completely evinced than on this occasion the prophetic sagacity of the saying of Napoleon seven months before, that a victory by the allies on the plains of Leon would arrest every French army in the Peninsula. No sooner was the advance of Sir John Moore known at Madrid, than it instantly paralysed the movements of the whole French armies in the South of Spain. Napoleon immediately despatched orders in all directions to suspend the expeditions into the different provinces which were in preparation. Milhaud's and Lasalle's cuirassiers were arrested at Talavera; Victor's advanced guards were recalled from La Mancha; the expedition against Valencia was abandoned, the preparations against Saragossa suspended; and fifty thousand men, under the Emperor in person, including the Imperial Guards, the whole of Ney's corps, and great part of the reserve, the flower of the army, were, at a few hours' notice, suddenly marched off in the direction of Somo-sierra.²

42.
This movement instantly paralyzes the further advance of the French to the South.

Dec. 31.
² Jom. ii.
113. Tor. ii.
187. Nap. i.
461.

On the evening of the 22d, they were at the foot of the Guadarrama Pass; but a violent hurricane of wind and snow enveloped the higher parts of the mountains, where

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

43.

Rapid march
of Napoleon
with an over-
whelming
force towards
the English
troops.
Dec. 23.

the thermometer was at 10° ;* and the general in command of the advance guard, after twelve hours of fruitless toil, reported that the passage was impracticable. The conqueror of the St Bernard, however, was not so easily to be arrested. Napoleon in person hastened to the advanced posts, and ordered the march to be continued without interruption, himself setting the example by pressing forward with the leading files on foot. The example animated the men to fresh exertions ; amidst storms of snow and sleet, which in the higher parts of the passage were truly frightful, the columns pressed on with ceaseless activity, and after two days of incessant labour the difficulties were surmounted, and the whole were collected on the northern side of the mountains, in the valley of the Douro. Urging on his troops with indefatigable activity, and riding even at that inclement season with the advanced posts in person, the Emperor soon arrived at the scene of action ; on the 26th, headquarters were at Tordesillas, the cavalry at Valladolid, and Ney's corps at Rio-Seco. Fully anticipating the immediate destruction of the English army, from the immense force now brought to bear against them, Napoleon on the same day wrote to Soult :—"The advanced posts of the cavalry are already at Benevente ; if the English remain another day in their position they are undone ; should they attack you with all their forces, retire a day's march to the rear ; the farther they advance the better for us ; if they retreat pursue them closely."¹

¹ Thib. vii.
174, 175.
Tor. ii. 187,
189. Nap. i.
461, 462.
Jom. ii. 113,
114.

44.
The English
retreat on the
line of Galici-
a.

The march of Ney by Zamora and Rio-Seco towards Benevente was so directed that he early cut off the British from their communication with Portugal ; and if he could have reached the latter town before Sir John Moore, he would have cut him off from the line of retreat to Galicia also, and rendered the situation of the army all but desperate. This catastrophe, however, was prevented by the prudent foresight of the English commander, who, having received vague but alarming accounts of the march of a large French army from the South, suspended his advance on the 23d, and on the 24th commenced his retreat towards Galicia. Great was the mortification of the soldiers at this determination, for

* About 14° of Fahrenheit.

they were in the highest state of vigour and spirits, and an unbroken series of brilliant successes at the outposts had produced an unbounded confidence in their own prowess, likely, if not met by overwhelming odds, to have led to the most important and glorious results. On the 26th, Baird's troops passed the Esla on their retreat, while Moore, who was with the rearguard to protect the passage of the stores and baggage over the bridge of Castro-Gonzalo, was threatened by a large body of Ney's horsemen. Lord Paget, however, with two squadrons of the 10th, charged and overthrew them, making a hundred prisoners, besides numbers killed and wounded. Indeed, the superiority of the English horse had become so apparent, that they set all odds at defiance, never hesitated to attack the enemy's cavalry, though threefold in number, and had already made five hundred prisoners, during the few days they had been engaged in active operations.¹

CHAP.
LV.
1808.

Dec. 26.

¹ Lond. i.
247, 253.
Nap. i. 462,
464. Tor. i.
188, 189.

By this timely retreat, Sir John Moore reached Benevente before the enemy; and the hazardous operation of crossing the Esla, then a roaring torrent swollen by melting snow, and over planks laid across the broken arches of the bridge of Castro, in the dark, was successfully performed by General Craufurd with the rearguard. The army remained two days at that place, reposing from its fatigues, under the shelter of its magnificent baronial castle, almost unequalled in Europe for extent and grandeur.* Discipline, however, had already become seriously

45.
Gallant action of light cavalry with the enemy, and capture of Lefebvre Desnouettes.

* This splendid relic of feudal grandeur is thus described by an eloquent eye-witness, whose pictures, equally vivid in travels as in history, have given to prose all the colours of poetry. "The Castle of Benevente is one of the finest monuments of the age of chivalry; nothing in England approaches to it in magnificence. Berkeley, Raby, even Warwick, are poor fabrics in comparison. With Gothic grandeur it has the richness of Moorish decoration; open alcoves where Saracenic arches are supported by pillars of porphyry and granite; cloisters with fountains playing in their courts; jasper columns, and tessellated floors; niches all over, and seats in the walls, over-arched in various forms, and enriched with every grotesque adornment of gold and silver, and colours which are hardly less gorgeous. It belonged to the Duke of Ossuna, and the splendour of old times was still continued there. The extent of this magnificent structure may be estimated from this single circumstance, that two regiments, besides artillery, were quartered within its walls; they proved the most destructive enemies that had ever entered them; the officers, who felt and admired the beauties of this venerable pile, attempted in vain to save it from devastation. Every thing combustible was seized; fires were lighted against the fine walls, and pictures of unknown value, the works, perhaps, of the greatest Spanish masters, were heaped together as fuel. Fortunately the archives of the family escaped."—SOUTHEY, i. 499.

In the midst of this disgraceful scene of unbridled license and military devastation, there is one trait of heroic presence of mind, which in some degree redeems the character of the British soldier. Several thousand infantry slept

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

Dec. 28.

1 Lond. i.
253, 256.
Nap. i. 467,
468. Tor. i.
189, 190.
Larry, iii.
127.

relaxed during the retreat, though only of three days' duration, from Sahagun ; the spirit of the men had been surprisingly depressed by the thoughts of retiring before the enemy: the officers had, in a great degree, lost their authority, and disorders equally fatal to the army and inhabitants had already commenced. But these evils were accumulating only in the front part of the column, which was suffering merely under the fatigues of the march and the severity of the weather ; no decline of spirit or enterprise was perceptible in the rearguard, which was in presence of the enemy. Pickets of cavalry had been left to guard the fords of the Esla ; and, on the 28th, a body of six hundred horsemen of the Imperial Guard crossed over, and began to drive in the rearguard, stationed in that quarter to repel their incursions. Instantly, these gallant horsemen made ready to oppose them, and though only two hundred in number, repeatedly faced about, and by successive charges, under Colonel Otway, retarded the advance of the enemy till assistance was at hand. At length the enemy having been drawn sufficiently far into the plain, the 10th, who were formed, concealed by some houses, suddenly appeared, and advanced to the assistance of their brave comrades. At the joyful sight of the well-known plumes, the retiring horsemen wheeled about, a loud cheer was given, and the whole bore down at full speed upon the enemy. The Imperial Guard, the flower of the French army, wreathed with the trophies of Austerlitz, were in an instant broken and driven over the Esla, with the loss of a hundred and thirty killed, and seventy prisoners, among whom was their commander, General Lefebvre Desnouettes.¹

The destruction of the bridge of Castro-Gonzalo was so

in the long galleries of an immense convent built round a square ; the horses of the cavalry and artillery, scarcely less numerous, were in the corridor below, so closely jammed together that no one could pass between them, and there was but one entrance. Two officers, returning at night from the Bridge of Castro, being desirous of finding shelter for their men, entered the gate of this convent, and perceived with horror that a large window-shutter was on fire, and the flames were spreading to the rafters above, from whence a single spark falling on the straw under the horses would ignite the whole, and six thousand men and horses would inevitably perish. Without saying a word, one of them (Captain Lloyd of the 43d) made a sign to his companions to keep silence, and springing on the nearest horse, ran along the backs of the others till he reached the flaming shutter, which by great efforts he tore from its hinges and flung into the court-yard without giving any alarm ; which, in such circumstances, would have been hardly less destructive than the flames.—See *Life of a Sergeant*, p. 143 ; and NAPIER, i. 467.

thoroughly effected, that it delayed for two days the advance of the French, who could not cross the stream at other points from its swollen state; but at length, the arches having been restored, Bessières crossed on the 30th with nine thousand horsemen, and reached Benevente, which had been evacuated by the English on the same day. At the same time, the bridge of Mansilla, guarded by Romana's troops, was forced by a charge of cavalry, and Soult, passing over, overspread the plains of Leon with his light horse, and captured the town of the same name, with great stores belonging to the Spanish government. The whole army, consisting of the guards, reserve, Soult's and Ney's corps, in all seventy thousand strong, including ten thousand horse, and a hundred pieces of cannon, were, on the 1st January, united by the Emperor at Astorga. The union of so great a force in that remote part of the Peninsula, was both the highest compliment that could be paid by that great general to the prowess of the English army, the clearest demonstration of the importance of the stroke delivered by its commander, and the strongest proof of the vigour and celerity with which, by long experience and admirable arrangements, the movements of the French troops could be effected. In ten days Napoleon had not only transported fifty thousand men from Madrid to Astorga, a distance of two hundred miles, but crossed the Guadarrama range when enveloped in a frightful snow-storm, and the torrent of the Esla when swollen by wintry rains. In each of those operations more than a day's march had been lost, so that the advanced posts of his army at least had marched the astonishing number of twenty-five miles a-day when actually in motion, in the depth of winter; an instance of exertion almost unparalleled in modern times.* But they were there left by Napoleon.¹

On the road between Benevente and Astorga, when

* It has been greatly exceeded, however, in the same country in later times, though by a much smaller force. In December 1836, the Spanish General Gomez marched from the lines of St Roque in front of Gibraltar to Tudela on the Ebro: he left St Roque on the 24th November, and reached the Ebro on the 17th December, having repeatedly fought, and been driven to circuitous roads to avoid the enemy on the way. The distance was above five hundred miles, performed in twenty-five days. There is no such instance of sustained effort in modern times. Septimius Severus marched from Vienna to Rome, a distance of eight hundred miles, in forty days, or twenty miles a-day; but he had the glittering prospect of the empire to animate his exertions.—See *Ann. Reg.* 1836, 379, 380; and GIBBON, ch. iv.

CHAP.
LV.

1808.

46.

The Emperor
continues the
pursuit to
Astorga.

Jan. 1, 1809.

¹ Tor. ii. 189,
190. Lond.
256, 259.
Pellet,
Guerre de
1809, i. 47,
48.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

47.
But thence
returns to
Paris.

Jan. 3.

¹ Nap. i. 469,
473. Tor. ii.
189, 195.
Lond. i. 256,
259. Thib.
vii. 176, 185.
Pellet,
Guerre de
1809, i. 47,
48.

48.
Sir John
Moore retires
to Lugo.

riding in pursuit at the gallop with the advanced posts, he was overtaken by a courier with despatches; he instantly dismounted, ordered a bivouac-fire to be lighted by the roadside, and seating himself beside it on the ground, was soon so lost in thought as to be insensible to the snow which fell in thick flakes around him. He had ample subject for meditation; they contained authentic intelligence of the accession of Austria to the European Confederacy, and the rapid preparations which her armies were making for taking the field. On the spot, he wrote an order for calling into immediate activity the second levy of eighty thousand conscripts authorised by the Senatus Consultum of 10th October preceding; and proceeding slowly and pensively on to Astorga, remained there for two days, writing innumerable despatches and regulating at once the pursuit of the English army, the internal affairs of Spain, the organisation of the forces of the Rhenish Confederacy, and the development of the gigantic strength of France for the German war. On the 3d he returned to Valladolid, where he remained three days, still indefatigably engaged in writing despatches, and then returned, with extraordinary celerity, by Burgos* and Bayonne, to Paris, where he arrived on the 23d. He took back his guards, but sent on Soult and Ney with two divisions of the reserve, in all about sixty thousand men, to continue the pursuit of the English, who were falling back by rapid marches, and in great disorder, towards the Galician mountains.¹

The withdrawing of the Emperor, however, made no change in the vigour with which the pursuit of the English army was continued. Soult, who immediately pressed upon their retiring columns, had twenty thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry under his command; and though the British army was still nearly twenty thousand strong, yet the inclemency of the weather and

* He is said to have ridden from Valladolid to Burgos, a distance of *thirty-five French leagues*, in *five hours*! This rapidity would appear incredible, were it not for the circumstance that the Emperor here had his saddle-horses arranged by divisions of nine each at every three or four leagues along the road, so that every eight or ten miles he found fresh relays of his own horses, which were in admirable condition. This was his usual practice wherever there appeared the least chance of his riding on horseback during his journeys. The remainder of the road to Paris he travelled in his carriage.—See THIBAU-DEAU, vii. 194.

rapidity of the retreat had in a great degree relaxed the bonds of discipline, and diminished the moral strength of the soldiers.* The rearguard, indeed, still with unabated resolution repelled the attacks of the enemy; but the other troops, who had not the excitement of combat, often sank under the rigour of the season, or yielded to the temptations of intemperance, which the extensive stores of wine along their line of march too readily afforded. The native and ineradicable vice of northern climates, drunkenness, here appeared in frightful colours. The great wine-vaults of Bembibre proved more fatal than the sword of the enemy; and when the gallant rearguard, which preserved its ranks unbroken, closed up the array, they had to force their way through a motley crowd of English and Spanish soldiers, stragglers and marauders, who reeled out of the houses in disgusting crowds, or lay stretched on the roadside an easy prey to the enemy's cavalry, which thundered in close pursuit. The condition of the army daily became more deplorable. The frost had been succeeded by a thaw; rain and sleet fell in torrents; the roads were almost broken up; the horses foundered at every step; the few artillery-waggons which had hitherto kept up, fell one by one to the rear, and being immediately blown up to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands, gave melancholy token, by the sound of their explosions, of the work of destruction which was going on.¹

¹ Nap. i. 473,
478. Tor. ii.
193, 194.
Lond. i. 260,
267.

The mountain-passes through which the retreat was conducted, presented, indeed, in many places positions in which a few regiments might have arrested, for a time at least, on that single road, an army; but it was thought there was no use in contesting them, as the vastly superior numbers of the enemy, and the advancing columns of Ney's corps, were supposed to give the pursuers the power of speedily turning them on either flank. It is well known also to all really acquainted with war, that a mountainous region, in appearance the most defensible, is in reality often in the end the most indefensible of all districts, against a superior and enterprising enemy, led by a skilful general. Sir John Moore was constantly with the rearguard, doing his utmost to arrest the disorders and pro-

49.
Increasing
disorder of
the retreat.

* Three thousand men, chiefly light troops, had been detached from the main body to Vigo, to facilitate the embarkation on which the English commander was already determined.—NAPIER, i. 473.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

Jan. 5.

tect the retiring columns ; and at Villa Franca a sharp skirmish ensued with the foremost of the pursuers, in which, though the French cavalry were at first successful, they were ultimately repulsed by a heavy fire from the British light troops, with the loss of several hundred men, including General Colbert, who fell while gallantly leading on the vanguard. In other quarters, however, the same discipline was not preserved. Disorders went on accumulating with frightful rapidity along the whole line ; and such was the general wreck of presence of mind or foresight, that at Nogales the military chest of the army, containing £25,000 in dollars, having stuck fast in the mud, the treasure was rolled in the cask in which it was contained over a precipitous descent, and became the prey of the peasantry, who picked it up at the bottom. All order or subordination was now at an end ; the soldiers, exhausted by fatigue, or depressed by suffering, sank down by hundreds on the wayside, and breathed their last, some with prayers, others with curses on their lips ; and the army, in frightful disorder, at length reached Lugo, late on the evening of the 6th January.¹

¹ Tor. ii. 194,
198. Nap. i.
473, 481.
Lond. i. 260,
267. South.
ii. 504, 514.

50.
And offers
battle, which
is declined.

Here, however, Sir John Moore halted, and in a proclamation issued next day, severely rebuked the insubordination of the troops, and announced his intention of offering battle to the enemy. The army, accordingly, was drawn up in a strong position, extending along a ridge of low hills, flanked on either side by precipitous rocks, from the mountains to the bed of the Minho ; and it then speedily appeared that the preceding disorders of the march had at least not been owing to want of courage. Instantly, as if by enchantment, the disorder ceased ; joyfully the men fell into their places, the stragglers came up from the rear ; arms were cleaned, faces brightened, confidence was restored ; and before the morning of the 8th nineteen thousand men stood in battle array, impatiently awaiting the attack of the enemy. Soult, however, declined the combat, though on that day he had seventeen thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and fifty pieces of artillery in line ; and Moore, having gained his object of recruiting his troops, and having little food remaining in the stores of Lugo, broke up in the following night and retired towards Corunna.²

Jan. 8.

² Nap. i. 485,
486. Tor. ii.
185, 196.
Lond. i. 270,
276.

The night was cold and tempestuous ; a severe storm of wind and rain, mixed with sleet, burst upon the troops ; and in the confusion of a nocturnal retreat, two divisions lost their way, and complete disorganisation ensued ; inso-much that a large part of the army became little better than a mass of stragglers, who were only prevented from becoming the prey of the pursuers by the fortunate circumstance of none of his cavalry appearing in sight. Order having, at daylight, been in some degree restored, Sir John Moore collected the army into a solid mass, and the retreat to Corunna was effected without further molestation from the enemy, the night-march from Lugo having gained to the British twelve hours' start of their pursuers, which they were never afterwards able to regain ; but notwithstanding this, it was nearly as disorderly and harassing as the preceding part had been. As the troops successively arrived at the heights from whence the sea was visible, and Corunna, with its white citadel and towers, rose upon the view, all eyes were anxiously directed to the bay, in hopes that the joyful sight of a friendly fleet of transports might be seen ; but the wide expanse was deserted, and a few coasters and fishing-boats alone were visible on the dreary main. Deeply did every one then lament that a battle had not been fought long before ; and as the officers cast their eyes on the low sand-hills in front of the ramparts of the town, on which they well knew the contest for their embarkation must be sustained, they thought with poignant regret of the innumerable positions, a hundred times stronger, which, in the course of the retreat, might have been taken up for the encounter. Now, however, there was no alternative ; the sea was in their front, the enemy in their rear, fight they must to secure the means of embarkation, be the position favourable or unfavourable.¹

The brigades, as they successively arrived, were passed on into the town, and all the means which circumstances would admit of taken to strengthen the land defences, which, though regular, were very weak ; the inhabitants cheerfully and honourably joining in the toil, though they well knew, from the preparations which were going forward, that an embarkation was intended. On the day following, two powder-magazines, at a short distance with-

**CHAP.
LV.**

1809.

51.

Continues the
retreat to
Corunna.
Hardships
undergone by
the troops.

Jan. 11.

² Tor. ii. 199,
200. Lond. i.
278, 280
Nap. i. 487.

52.

Arrival at
Corunna of
the troops
and the trans-
ports from
Vigo Bay.
Jan. 12.
Jan. 13.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

Jan. 14.

¹ Lond. i.
278, 279.
Tor. ii. 198,
180. Nap. i.
487, 488.

53.
Position of
the British
in front of
Corunna.

out the walls, containing four thousand barrels of powder, the gift of England, were blown up, with an explosion so terrific, that nothing in the whole course of the war approached to it. The coast resembled the sudden explosion of a volcano ; the city was shaken to its foundations, the rocks torn from their bases, the sea was tossed as in a tempest, the earth shook for leagues around ; while slowly arose in the air a huge black cloud, shooting forth dazzling sparks, from whence, at a great height, stones burst forth with a prodigious sound, and fell with a sharp rattle in all directions. A stillness yet more awful ensued, broken only by the hoarse and sullen lashing of the still agitated waves on the shore.* On the following day, the transports from Vigo hove in sight, and soon after stood into the bay. Preparations were immediately made for the embarkation of the sick and wounded ; the cavalry horses were almost all destroyed, and the greater part of the artillery, consisting of fifty-two pieces, put on board ; eight British and four Spanish being only reserved for immediate use. Notwithstanding all the sufferings of the retreat, not one gun had been taken by the enemy.¹

Meanwhile, the bulk of the army, still fourteen thousand strong, was drawn up with great care by Sir John Moore, on a range of heights, or rather of swelling knolls, which formed a sort of amphitheatre around the village of Elvina, at the distance of rather more than a mile from CORUNNA. Hope's division was on the left, its flank covered by the muddy stream of the Mero, commanding the road to Lugo ; Baird's next, directly behind Elvina ; then the rifles and Frazer's division, which watched the coast-road to St Jago, and was prepared to support any menaced point ; General Paget, half a mile in the rear, with the reserve, at the village of Airis. The French, full twenty thousand strong, were posted on a higher semicircular ridge, sweeping round the lesser one occupied by the British at the distance of about a mile. Laborde's division was on the right, Merle's in the centre,

* It is from Colonel Napier, an eye-witness, that this elegant description is taken. Whoever has had the good fortune to see that most sublime of spectacles, an eruption of Vesuvius, will have no difficulty in giving implicit credit to the graphic truth of the picture. The author witnessed one in 1818, and the act of transcribing these lines recalls, in all its vividness, the thrilling recollection of the matchless scene.

Mermet's on the left ; their light field-pieces were distributed along the front of the line ; the dragoons, under Lahoussaye, Lorge, and Franceschi, to which the English had nothing to oppose, clustered to the left of the infantry, and menaced the British right flank ; while a great battery of twelve heavy guns, advantageously posted on a steep eminence between their foot and horse, not twelve hundred yards from Baird's division, was prepared to carry devastation along the whole line. From the inactivity of the French army during the two preceding days, Sir John Moore had been led to imagine that they had no serious intention of disquieting his retreat ; and preparations, on the 16th, were making for withdrawing the troops into the town as soon as the darkness would admit of its being done without observation. But, about noon, a general movement was seen along their whole line ; and soon after, at two o'clock, their infantry, in four massy columns, was observed to be descending from the heights which they occupied, and advancing with a swift step towards the English position. Perceiving that the hour he had so long and so passionately wished for was at hand, Sir John Moore instantly galloped to the front ; the troops every where stood to their arms, and deployed into line ; while the French, according to custom, advanced in long and deep columns, preceded by a cloud of light troops.¹

Their onset, as at Vimeira, and in all the subsequent actions of the war, was extremely impetuous. A cloud of skirmishers led the way, who drove in the English advanced posts with great vigour, and in the confusion of their retreat made themselves masters of Elvina, directly in front of the centre. As they drew near to the British position they deployed into line, and it soon appeared that they extended greatly beyond its extreme right ; but the 4th regiment, which was there stationed, noways discouraged by this alarming circumstance, threw back its right wing ; and, presenting a front in two directions, in which attitude it advanced, was soon warmly engaged with the enemy. Highly delighted with this display of presence of mind, and deeming the right secure when intrusted to such intrepid defenders,² Sir John Moore rode up to Baird's division in the centre,

CHAP.
LV.
1809.

Jan. 16.

¹ Nap. 487.
488. Tor. ii.
199, 200.
Lond. i. 278.
280. South.
519, 523.
Jom. iii. 116.

54.
Battle of
Corunna.
Commence-
ment of the
action.

² Jom. iii.
117. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
372. Hope's
official Desp.
Nap. i. 494,
495. Tor. ii.
116.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

55.
Vehement
struggle in
the centre.

which had now come to blows with their opponents there, who, having carried Elvina, were bursting through the enclosures which lay between its houses and the British with loud cries and all the exultation of victory.

The action now became extremely warm along the whole line. The French and English centres advanced to within pistol-shot of each other; and after exchanging a few volleys, the 50th and 42d charged bayonets, and drove the enemy opposed to them in the most gallant style back again through Elvina, and a considerable way up the slope on the other side. But this furious onset being carried too far, and not adequately supported, met with a severe check; the victorious troops, when broken by the enclosures and stone-walls on the other side of the village, were assailed in their turn by fresh French regiments, and driven back a second time through its streets, Major Napier, who commanded the 50th, being wounded and made prisoner. But Moore was at hand to repair the disorder. Instantly addressing the 42d regiment with the animating words, "Highlanders, remember Egypt!" and bringing up a battalion of the Guards to its support, he again led them forward to the charge. The shock was irresistible: borne back at the point of the bayonet, the enemy were again driven into Elvina, from whence, after a desperate struggle, they were finally expelled with great slaughter. In this decisive contest, however, Sir John Moore received a mortal wound from a cannon-shot; and Sir David Baird, struck down at the head of his men, had been shortly before carried from the field in a senseless condition.¹

¹ General Hope's account of the battle. Ann. Reg. 1809, p. 428. Nap. i. 494, 496. Lond. i. 285, 286. Tor. ii. 201, 202.

56
Repulse of
the French.

Foiled in this attempt to pierce the centre, Soult renewed his attacks with Laborde's division on the left while a heavy column endeavoured to steal unperceived round the British right, where they so greatly outflanked their opponents. But the ground on the left being in favour of the English, all his efforts were defeated with comparative ease; and General Hope, who commanded there, pressing forward in pursuit of the repulsed columns, carried the village of Palavio Abaxo, close under the enemy's original position, which remained in his hands at nightfall. At the same time, on the right, General Paget, with the reserve, not only at once

perceived and advanced to meet the column which was endeavouring to turn his flank, but assailed it with such vigour, that it was thrown back upon Lahoussaye's dragoons, and the whole driven in disorder to the foot of the hill on which the great battery was placed. When night, arriving in that wintry season at an early hour, separated the combatants, the enemy was not only repulsed at all points, but the British line was considerably in front of the ground they had occupied at the commencement of the action. They held, on the left, Palavio Abaxo; in the centre, Elvina; and on the right were advanced to the acclivity of their central battery. Had Frazier's troops, stationed on the coast-road to St Jago on the extreme right, been at hand to support this splendid advance of the reserve, and an hour more of daylight remained, the enemy would have been routed. Had the cavalry been on the field, or the horses not foundered, he would have been thrown back in irretrievable confusion on the swampy stream of the Mero, now flooded by the full tide, and traversed only by a single arch at El Burgo, and totally annihilated. Night, however, having supervened when the success was still incomplete, and the means of embarking unmolested having been gained by the enemy's repulse, General Hope, upon whom the command had devolved, did not conceive himself warranted in making any change in the preparations for departure; and after dark the troops were withdrawn into the town, where they were all got on board without either confusion or delay.^{1*}

¹ Hope's Despatch, Ann. Reg. 1809, p. 373. Nap. i. 498, 499. Lond. i. 287. Tor. ii. 201, 202.

Sir John Moore received his death-wound while animating the 42d to the charge. A cannon-ball struck his left breast, and beat him down by its violence to the

* The British loss at Corunna was from 800 to 1000 men; that of the French was stated by their own officers to Colonel Napier at 3000; Sir John Hope estimated it at 1600, but it was at least 2000—a number which would doubtless appear surprisingly large, if the murderous effect of the fire of the British infantry, from the coolness and discipline of the men, were not decisively proved by every action throughout the war. The total loss of the army during the retreat was 4033, of whom 1397 were missing before the position at Lugo, and 2636 from that to the final embarkation of the army, including those who fell at Corunna: of this number 800 stragglers contrived to escape into Portugal, and being united with the sick left in that country, formed a corps of 1876 men, which afterwards did good service, both at Oporto and Talavera. Six three-pounders which never were horsed were thrown over the rocks near Villa-Franca: the guns used at Corunna, twelve in number, were spiked and buried in the sand, but afterwards discovered by the enemy. Not one, from first to last, was taken in fight.—See the *General Returns* quoted in NAPIER, i. App. No. 26.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

57.

Mortal
wound of Sir
John Moore.

earth ; but his countenance remained unchanged, not a sigh escaped his lips, and, sitting on the ground, he watched with an anxious and steadfast eye the progress of the battle. As it advanced, however, and it became manifest that the troops were gaining ground, his countenance brightened, and he reluctantly allowed himself to be carried to the rear. Then the dreadful nature of the wound appeared : the shoulder was shattered to pieces ; the arm hanging by a film of skin, the breast and lungs almost laid open. As the soldiers placed him on a blanket to carry him from the field, the hilt of his sword was driven into the wound : an officer, destined to celebrity in future times, CAPTAIN HARDINGE, attempted to take it off, but the dying hero exclaimed, "It is as well as it is ; I had rather it should go off the field with me." He was carried by the soldiers towards the town, but though the pain of the wound soon became excessive, such was the serenity of his countenance, that those around him expressed a hope of his recovery. "No," said he, "I feel that is impossible." When approaching the ramparts, he several times desired his attendants to stop, and turn him round that he might again see the field of battle ; and when the advance of the firing indicated that the British were successful, he expressed his satisfaction, and a smile overspread the features that were relaxing in death.¹

¹ Moore's
Narrative,
364, 371.
Nap. i. 499.

58.

His death.

The examination of his wound at his lodgings, speedily cut off all hope of recovery ; but he never for an instant lost his serenity of mind, and repeatedly expressed his satisfaction when he heard that the enemy were beaten. "You know," said he to his old friend Colonel Anderson, "that I always wished to die this way." He continued to converse in a calm and even cheerful voice, on the events of the day, inquiring after the safety of his friends and staff, and recommended several for promotion on account of their services during the retreat. "Stanhope," said he, observing Captain Stanhope, "remember me to your sister."* Once only his voice faltered, as he spoke of his mother. Life was

* The celebrated Lady Hester Stanhope, to whom he was engaged—the partner of Mr Pitt's counsels for many years, and since so celebrated for her romantic adventures in the East.

ebbing fast, and his strength was all but extinct, when he exclaimed, in words which will for ever thrill in every British heart,—“I hope the people of England will be satisfied: I hope my country will do me justice.” Released in a few minutes after from his sufferings, he was wrapped by his attendants in his military cloak, and laid in a grave hastily formed on the ramparts of Corunna, where a monument was soon after erected over his uncoffined remains by the generosity of Marshal Ney. Not a word was spoken as the melancholy interment by torch-light took place; silently they laid him in his grave, while the distant cannon of the battle fired the funeral honours to his memory.¹*

CHAP.
LV.
1809.

¹ Moore's
Narrative,
354, 371.
Nap. i. 499,
500.

This tomb, originally erected by the French, since enlarged by the British, bears a simple but touching inscription,† worthy of the hero over whose remains it is placed. Few spots in Europe will ever be more the object of general interest. His very misfortunes were the means which procured him immortal fame; his disastrous retreat, bloody death, and finally his tomb on a foreign strand, far from kin and friends.—“There is scarcely a Spaniard,” it has been eloquently said, “but has heard of this tomb, and speaks of it with a strange kind of awe. Immense treasures are said to have been buried with the heretic general, though for what purpose no one pretends to guess. The demon of the clouds, if we may trust the Gallegans, followed the

59.
His grave,
and veneration with
which it is
regarded in
Spain.

* This touching scene will live for ever in the British heart, embalmed in the exquisite words of the poet:—

“Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.
We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.
No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.
Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow,
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was
dead,
And we bitterly thought on the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread
o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for re-
tiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a
stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.”

† “JOHN MOORE,

LEADER OF THE ENGLISH ARMIES,

SLAIN IN BATTLE, 1809.”

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

¹ Borrow's
Bible in
Spain, i. 271.

English in their flight, and assailed them with water-spouts as they toiled up the steep winding paths of Fucecabadon; whilst legends the most wild are related of the manner in which the stout soldier fell.—Yes, even in Spain immortality has already crowned the head of Moore;—Spain, the land of oblivion, where the Guadalete flows.”¹

60.
Embarkation
of the troops,
and their
return to
England.
Jan. 17.

On the fall of Sir John Moore, and the wound of Sir David Baird, the command devolved upon General Hope, who conducted the remaining arrangements with that decision and judgment which afterwards became so conspicuous in the Peninsular war, and whose eloquent despatch announcing the battle of Corunna and the death of Sir John Moore, agitated so profoundly the heart of his country.* The boats being all in readiness, the embarkation commenced at ten at night; the troops were silently filed down to the beach, put on board with admirable order, and the whole, except the rearguard, reached the transports in safety before day. GENERAL BERESFORD, at the head of the rearguard, two thousand strong, and GENERAL HILL, who was stationed on the promontory behind the town, both destined to celebrity in future times, were the last to be withdrawn; the latter did not embark till three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day. The French gave them no annoyance, so strongly had the bloody repulse of the preceding day inspired them with respect for British valour. With a courage and generosity worthy of the highest admiration, the Spaniards manned the ramparts when the last of the English forces were withdrawn, and prolonged the defence for several days, so as to allow the whole sick, wounded, artillery, stores, and even prisoners, to be brought away.

* “I need not expatiate on the loss which the army and his country have sustained by the death of Sir John Moore. His fall has deprived me of a valuable friend, to whom long experience of his worth had sincerely attached me. But it is chiefly on public grounds that I must lament the blow. It will be the conversation of every one who loved or respected his manly character, that after conducting the army through an arduous retreat with consummate firmness, he has terminated a career of distinguished honour, by a death that has given the enemy additional reason to respect the name of a British soldier. Like the immortal Wolfe, he is snatched from his country at an early period of a life spent in her service; like Wolfe, his last moments were gilded by the prospect of success, and cheered by the acclamation of victory; like Wolfe, also, his memory will for ever remain sacred, in that country which he sincerely served, and which he had so faithfully served.”—SIR JOHN HOPE to SIR DAVID BAIRD, Jan. 18th 1809; *Ann. Reg.* 1809, *App. to Chron.* 375.

A few guns placed by the French on the heights of St Lucie, without the walls, which could not be maintained, alone occasioned, by the fire which they opened upon the vessels in the bay, great confusion among the transports, but without doing any serious damage. At length the last of the long files of baggage and stragglers were got on board, and the English fleet, amidst the tears of the inhabitants, stood to the northward, and were lost to the sight amidst the cold expanse of the watery main. Then, and not till then, the inhabitants of Corunna, feeling it in vain to prolong a defence which such a host had resigned in despair, and having honourably discharged every duty to their discomfited allies, capitulated to Marshal Soult, who, a few days afterwards, obtained possession, after a trifling resistance, of the important fortress of Ferrol, with seven sail of the line, and very extensive naval stores.¹

¹ Tor. ii. 203.
205. Nap. i.
498, 499.
Lond. i. 289,
291. South.
ii. 530, 531.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the gloom and despondency which prevailed in the British isles when intelligence of this long catalogue of disasters was received. In proportion to the warm and enthusiastic hopes which had been formed of a successful issue to the patriotic cause, had been the anxiety and interest which was felt when the crisis approached. In particular, when Napoleon, at the head of three hundred thousand chosen troops, burst through the Pyrenees, and the brave but undisciplined Spanish levies were brought in contact with his experienced veterans, the public anxiety became almost unbearable. The rout of Espinosa, the overthrow at Burgos, the defeat of Tudela, succeeding each other in rapid succession, were felt the more keenly, that the British nation had been led by the exaggerations of the public journals to form a most erroneous idea, both of the strength of the Spanish and the force of the French armies. Most of all, they were misled by the pleasing illusion, which the experience of every age has proved to be fallacious, but which is probably destined to the end of the world to deceive the enthusiastic portion of mankind, that a certain degree of popular excitement can supply the want of discipline and experience, and that general ardour is more to be relied on than organisation and conduct.

61.
Extreme
gloom which
these events
produce in
the British
isles.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

62.

Despair
which seized
the public
mind.

When, therefore, the Spanish levies, flushed with the trophies of Baylen and Saragossa, were dissipated with more ease than the regular armies of Austria and Muscovy; when the Somo-sierra pass was stormed by a charge of lancers, and Madrid fell within three weeks after the campaign had been opened by Napoleon, a sort of despair seized the public mind, and nothing seemed now capable of withstanding a power which beat down with equal ease the regular forces of northern, and the enthusiastic levies of southern Europe. A transient gleam shot across the gloom when Sir John Moore advanced to Sahagun, and the English journals confidently announced that seventy thousand English and Spaniards were rapidly interposing between the Emperor and the French frontier, and would possibly make him prisoner in the capital he had won. Proportionally deeper was the gloom when this hope also proved fallacious, when Romana's forty thousand men dwindled into a few thousand starving wanderers, and the British army, instead of making Napoleon prisoner in the heart of Spain, was expelled, after a disastrous retreat, with the loss of its general, from the shores of the Peninsula.

63.
Horror ex-
cited by the
appearance of
the army on
its return.

The English had hitherto only known war in its holiday dress: their ideas of it were formed on the pomp of melodramatic representation, or the interest of pacific reviews: and though strongly impressed with a military spirit, they were, from their happy insular situation, strangers to the hardships and the calamities of actual campaigns. The inhabitants of the towns along the Channel had seen the successive expeditions which composed Sir John Moore's army embark in all the pride of military display, with drums beating and colours flying, amidst the cheers and tears of a countless host of spectators. When, therefore, they beheld the same regiments return, now reduced to half their numbers, with haggard countenances, ragged accoutrements, and worn-out clothing, they were struck with astonishment and horror. This was soon increased and turned into well-founded alarm, by a malignant fever which the troops brought back with them, the result of fatigue, confinement on shipboard, and mental depression, and by the dismal and often exaggerated accounts which were spread by the

survivors of the hardships and miseries they had undergone. These gloomy narratives riveted every mind by a painful but enchaining interest: they speedily made their way into the public newspapers, and were devoured with unceasing interest by the whole people. The fate of these gallant men became a general subject of commiseration; and the old cry, raised for factious purposes, began to resound through the land, that England could never contend on the Continent with France, and that the only rational policy for the prosecution of the war was to withdraw entirely behind our wooden walls.¹

CHAP.

LV.

1809.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 22, 25.
Nap. i. 529.

And yet, to a dispassionate observer, it could not but be manifest, that though the campaign had to both parties been deeply checkered by misfortune, it had in reality been far more calamitous to the French than the Allies; and that the power of Napoleon had received a shock ruder than any which it had yet received since his accession to the supreme authority. The Spanish armies, it is true, had been dispersed on the Ebro, the Somosierra forced, Madrid taken, and the British, after a calamitous retreat, driven to their ships. But the Peninsula was still unsubdued. Saragossa was fortifying its blood-stained battlements: Catalonia was in arms: Valencia and Andalusia were recruiting their forces: Portugal was untouched, and the British troops, though in diminished strength, still held the towers of Lisbon. No submission or subjugation had followed the irruption of three hundred thousand men into the Peninsula. Driven from their capital, the Spaniards, like their ancestors in the Roman and Moorish wars, were preparing in the provinces to maintain a separate warfare; while the number of their fortresses and chains of mountains, joined to the aid of England, promised them the means of there prolonging a desperate resistance. And what had happened in the same campaign to the hitherto invincible arms of France? One whole corps had laid down its arms with unheard-of disgrace; another had capitulated, and surrendered a kingdom to purchase its retreat; foiled in more than one provincial expedition, the imperial arms had been driven from the capital behind the Ebro, and only regained their lost ground by denuding Germany of its defenders, and exposing for the Peninsular thrones the

64.
Reflections
on the cam-
paign; its
character
checkered,
but on the
whole emi-
nently unfavourable to
France.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

Rhine itself to invasion. The spell which held the world enchained had been broken ; the dangerous secret had been disclosed that the French armies were not invincible. Already the effects of the discovery had become manifest : Europe had been shaken from one extremity to the other by the Peninsular disasters, and Austria, which beheld unmoved the desperate strife of Pultusk and Eylau, encouraged by the immersion of the best French armies in the Peninsula, was preparing to renew the struggle on a scale of unprecedented magnitude.

65.
Reflections
on the cam-
paign, and
effect of Sir
John Moore's
movement.

The movement in advance by Sir John Moore to Sahagun, his rapid subsequent retreat, when surrounded by superior forces, to Benevente, the skill with which he reorganised his shattered army at Lugo, and the firmness with which, disdaining every proposal for a capitulation,* he boldly fronted the enemy at Corunna, and met a glorious death on the field of victory, are worthy of the highest admiration, and will for ever secure him a place in the temple of British heroes. Nor is it merely the fond partiality of national gratitude, often mistaken or exaggerated in its opinions, which has secured this distinction : a calm consideration of the consequences of his campaign must, with all impartial observers, lead to the same result. In the whole annals of the Revolutionary war, there is not to be found a single movement more ably conceived, or attended with more important consequences. Levelled against the vital line of the enemy's communications, based on the principles which, unknown to the English general, Napoleon had so emphatically unfolded six months before in his secret despatch to Savary,¹ it had literally paralysed every hostile army in Spain ; snatched the Spanish monarchy from the verge of destruction, when its own resources were exhausted ; and by drawing Napoleon himself, with his terrible legions, into the northern extremity of the Peninsula, it both gave time to the southern provinces to restore their armies and arm their fortresses, and averted the war from Portugal, till

¹ Ante, c. liii.
§ 17, note.

* It was seriously pressed upon his consideration by several officers, when the absence of the transports on the first arrival at Corunna rendered it evident that a battle must be fought for the embarkation, but he indignantly rejected the proposal.—NAPIER, i. 492, 493 ; SOUTHEY, ii. 520.

an opportunity of organising fresh means of resistance within its frontiers was afforded. But for this bold and well-conceived advance, Andalusia would have been overrun, Valencia taken, Saragossa subdued, within a few weeks; and before the Emperor was recalled from the theatre of Peninsular warfare by the Austrian preparations, he would have realised his favourite threat of planting the French eagles on the towers of Lisbon. These great results, however, were attended with proportional dangers: Napoleon, with seventy thousand chosen troops, was speedily sweeping round the audacious enemy who had thus interrupted his designs, and but for the celerity and skill of the retreat to Astorga, the army which achieved them must certainly have been consigned to destruction.*

But if, in these particulars, the conduct of Sir John Moore was worthy of unqualified admiration, there are others in which the impartial voice of history must deal out a different measure of eulogium. Admitting that the celerity of the retreat to Astorga was unavoidable, and saved the army from destruction, where was the necessity for the subsequent forced marches to Lugo, when Napoleon had retired with his Guards from the pursuit, in dreadful weather, attended as it was with such ruinous effects upon the discipline and spirit of his troops? His ablest defenders admit that there were in the magazines of Villa Franca and Lugo provisions for fourteen days' consumption;¹ and even if there had been nothing¹ but the resources of the country to be had, subsequent events proved that they were sufficient for the maintenance of the army; for the French found wherewithal to live on and advance through it, even when following in the rear of the British soldiers. There was no necessity for hurrying on from the danger of being turned in flank, for Ney's corps was several days' march behind Soult's in the defile, and the rugged nature of the country rendered it totally impossible for his troops, worn out by a march of unexampled hardship and rapidity from Madrid, to attempt any threatening movement against the British flank.

CHAP.
LV.
1809.

66.
Errors which
he com-
mitted.

* Napoleon subsequently said, at St Helena, that nothing but the talents and firmness of Sir John Moore saved his army from destruction.—O'MEARA, I. 55.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

67.

Especially in
the undue
rapidity of
the retreat.

¹ Lond. I.
260, 261.

² Ante, c. xxi.
§§ 56, 57.

³ Nap. i. 488.

68.
Errors of Sir
David Baird.

Every thing, then, counselled deliberation and order in the retreating columns, and the nature of the road through which they passed, consisting of an ascent several leagues in length, up a bare slope, followed by tremendous passes, continuing for several days' journey, shut in on every side by steep or forest-clad mountains, offered the most favourable opportunities for stopping, by a vigorous resistance on the part of the rearguard, the active pursuit of the enemy.¹ The rapid restoration of discipline and order, when battle was offered at Lugo, and the issue of the fight at Corunna, leave no room for doubt as to what would have been the result of such a conflict; and the example of Moreau's retreat through the Black Forest, in 1796, was not required to show how effectually such a fierce aspect on the part of the retiring force saves the blood and secures the safety of the remainder of the army.² The luminous fact, that the losses sustained by the rearguard when they arrived at Corunna, notwithstanding all the combats they had undergone, were less than those of any other division of equal number in the army,³ affords a decisive proof how much would have been gained upon the whole by fighting at an earlier period, when the strength and discipline of the army were still comparatively unbroken.

But most of all, the step adopted by Sir David Baird, though a most gallant officer, in unison with Sir John Moore, in counselling the British government, instead of sending out the strong reinforcements which they projected, and had in preparation, to Galicia, to forward *empty transports* to bring away the troops, appears to have been unhappy in its consequences. These despatches were sent off in the course of December, and they were not acted upon by the British government without the most severe regret; but at their distance from the scene of action, they had no alternative but acquiescence.* But

* "The troops which had been embarked on board the transports in England to reinforce Sir John Moore's army," said Mr Canning, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in his place in parliament, "were disembarked in consequence of a distinct requisition from Sir David Baird, that he wanted a certain number of transports; and the transports from which these troops had been disembarked were sent out, pursuant to that requisition. It was an afflicting circumstance that it had become necessary to retard these troops, and send out empty, for the purpose of bringing off the British army, those transports which had been fitted for the purpose of reinforcement and assault. But at this distance from the scene of action, ministers could not venture to refuse to send out these

for this fatal step, the English army, upon their retreat to the sea-coast, would have found, instead of transports to bring them off, thirteen thousand fresh troops, sufficient to have enabled them to hold out these important fortresses against the enemy, and possibly take a bloody revenge on their pursuers. Ney and Soult would have been retained in Galicia by the presence of thirty thousand men, intrenched in fortified sea-ports on its coast; the incursion of Soult to Oporto would have been prevented, the battle of Talavera have proved a decisive victory, and the march of Wellington to the Alberche, unmenaced by the descent of Soult, Ney, and Mortier in his rear, might have led him in triumph to Madrid. If the British could not have maintained their ground behind the strong battlements of Ferrol, or the weaker fortifications of Corunna, that might have afforded a good reason for bringing the troops round to Lisbon or Cadiz; but it was none for setting sail to England with the whole expedition, abandoning the contest in the Peninsula as hopeless, when the south was still unsubdued, and leaving ten thousand English soldiers, still in Portugal, to their fate.*

In truth, this desponding conduct on the part of such able and gallant officers affords decisive proof that it was a much deeper and more general cause which was in operation, and that England was now paying the penalty,

transports. The sending them out empty cost government a severe pang: no resolution ever gave him more pain. Every dictate of the head was tortured, every feeling of the heart wrung by it; but ministers had no alternative, they were compelled to submit to the hard necessity." The troops so embarked, or in course of embarkation, were 13,000 men. What might not they have achieved, joined to the 17,000 whom Moore led back to Lugo and Corunna!—See *Parl. Deb.* xii. 1089, 1100. Sir John Moore also concurred in the propriety of withholding the reinforcements, and sending out the transports empty.—See *SOUTHEY*, ii. 519.

* "The road from Astorga to Corunna," says General Jomini, "traverses a long defile of thirty leagues, bounded by high mountains on either side. A slender rearguard would have sufficed to defend that chaussée. And it was impracticable to manœuvre on either flank of it. That rendered it impossible for Soult to get at the enemy; and Ney, entangled behind him in the defile, could do nothing. This was the more unfortunate, as the English army, having prepared nothing on that line, stood in want of every thing, and was in a frightful state of disorder, in consequence of the forced marches which it took for no conceivable reason. They cut the traces of their horses, and abandoned three or four thousand stragglers or dying men, when their line of operations was never menaced. It is impossible to conceive why the English did not defend Corunna. It is not, indeed, a Gibraltar; but against an enemy who had nothing but field-pieces, it surely could have been maintained for some time, the more especially as they could, at any time, throw in succours by sea. I never could understand their haste on that occasion, which the nation, it is true, has well wiped off in subsequent times.—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoléon*, iii. p. 115.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

69.

It was public
opinion
which was
really to
blame.

not of the incapacity of its generals, but of the long-established, and, till the Peninsular war opened, discreditable timidity in military transactions of its government. Accustomed only to land on the Continent for transient expeditions, and to look always, not to their guns and bayonets, but to their ships, as their ultimate refuge, the whole English nation were ignorant of the incalculable effects of *tenacity of purpose* upon public undertakings. They regarded the strength of the state as consisting chiefly in its naval power, when in reality it possessed a military force capable of contending, with fair chances of success, even against the conqueror of Continental Europe. Like the bulk of mankind in all ages, they judged of the future by the past, and were unaware of those important modifications of the lessons of experience which the rapid whirl of events in which they were placed was every hour bringing into action. In Sir John Moore's case, this universal, and perhaps unavoidable error, was greatly enhanced by his intimacy with some members of the Opposition party, by whom the military strength of England had been always underrated, the system of Continental operations uniformly decried, and the power and capacity of the French Emperor, great as they were, unworthily magnified.*

Almost all his despatches, in the later stages of the

* This has been vehemently denied by Col. Napier.—*Penin. War*, vi. *Just. Notes*, 2.—It is sufficient to say, therefore, that Moore's correspondence affords decisive evidence of its truth. On 16th August 1795, he wrote to his brother, "I have written to the Duke of Hamilton, and I make no doubt but in case of a dissolution he *will bring me into parliament* if he can;" and on the 27th March 1806, when the Whigs were in power, he wrote to his mother, "I have lately turned my thoughts to India, as the greatest and most important command that could fall to a British officer. The Duke of York has *communicated my wishes to ministers*, and the principal objection which has been made is *flattering*—that they do not wish me to go so far from this country. *Lord Lauderdale's appointment* has been an additional inducement for me to wish to go to India." It is needless to say that Sir John Moore was a man of too much honour to endeavour to get into parliament under the auspices of the leading Whig nobleman in Scotland, or to India under those of a Whig governor-general, if his political principles had been at variance with those of these noblemen.—See *Moore's Life*, 307, 392. But it is of little consequence to history whether a gallant officer like Sir John Moore was a Whig or a Tory; for the annals of England can boast of many illustrious commanders who belonged to both parties in politics, beginning with Marlborough on the one side, and Wellington on the other. It is more material to observe that Sir John's correspondence, when in command of the army, both official and private, demonstrates that he was so deeply imbued with those desponding views which the Opposition for fifteen years had been incessantly promulgating, as to the impossibility of the English resisting the power of France on the Continent of Europe, that he regarded the contest, not only in Spain, but in Portugal, as *utterly desperate*, and strongly recommended government to abandon the latter country as well as the former, as soon as it

campaign, evince in the clearest colours the influence of this depressing feeling, to which the false exaggerations and real disasters of the Spaniards afforded at the time too much confirmation. Instead, therefore, of casting a shade on the memory of any of the gallant officers intrusted with the direction of the campaign, let us regard its calamitous issue as the forfeit paid by the *nation* for the undue circumspection of former years, which had become so universal as to have penetrated the breast and chilled the hopes even of its most intrepid defenders, and

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

70.

Moore's desponding views with regard to the contest.

could be done with safety to the British troops in it. To Lord William Bentinck he wrote in private, on 14th November 1808, from Salamanca, before the campaign commenced :—" I differ with you in one point,—when you say the chief and great object and resistance to the French will be afforded by the English army ; if that be so, Spain is lost. The English army, I hope, will do all which can be expected from its numbers ; but the safety of Spain depends upon the union of its inhabitants, their enthusiasm in the cause, and their firm determination to die rather than submit to the French. Nothing short of this will enable them to resist the formidable attack about to be made upon them. If they will adhere, our aid can be of the greatest use to them ; but if not, we shall soon be outnumbered were our forces quadrupled. I am, therefore, much more anxious to see exertion and energy in the government, and enthusiasm in their armies, than to have my force augmented. The moment is a critical one—my own situation is peculiarly so—I have never seen it otherwise ; but I have pushed into Spain at all hazards. This was the order of my government, and it was the will of the people of England. I shall endeavour to do my best, hoping that all the bad that may happen will not happen, but that with a share of bad, we shall also have a portion of good fortune." " Every effort," he says, writing to Lord Castlereagh on the 24th of November, " shall be exerted on my part, and that of the officers with me, to unite the army ; but your lordship must be prepared to hear that we have failed ; for, situated as we are, *success cannot be commanded by any efforts we can make if the enemy are prepared to oppose us.*" To add to all his other grounds of despondency, he considered Portugal as utterly indefensible by any force England could send thither. " If the French succeed in Spain, *it will be in vain,*" he says in another letter to Lord Castlereagh, " *to attempt to resist them in Portugal.*" The Portuguese are without a military force, and, from the experience of their conduct under Sir Arthur Wellesley, no dependence is to be placed on any aid they can give. The British must, in that event, I conceive, immediately *take steps to evacuate the country.* Lisbon is the only port, and therefore the only place whence the army with its stores can embark. Elvas and Almeida are the only fortresses on the frontiers. The first is, I am told, a respectable work. Almeida is defective, and could not hold out beyond ten days against a regular attack. I have ordered a depot of provisions for a short consumption to be formed there in case this army should be obliged to fall back ; perhaps the same should be done at Elvas. In this case we might retard the progress of the enemy while the stores were embarking, and arrangements were made for taking off the army. *Beyond this, the defence of Lisbon or of Portugal should not be thought of.*"—CHAMBERS' *Scottish Biography*, iv. 32, 33. Contrast this with the memorandum of Wellington a few months after, on 9th March 1809, in which he expressed a decided opinion, that " *Portugal might be successfully defended even against any force the French could bring against it, and that the maintenance of that position by the British would be the greatest support to the common cause in Spain ;*" and observe the difference between an able, but not original, mind, which receives its impressions from the current doctrines of the day ; and those great intellects, which taking counsel only of their own inspiration, at once break off from general opinion, and for good or for evil determine the fate of nations.—See WELLINGTON'S *Memorandum on the defence of Portugal*, 9th March 1809 ; GURWOOD, iv. 261 ; quoted *infra*, vii. 762 ; and his *Despatches to Lord Castlereagh*, 2d April 1810 ; GURWOOD, vi. 5.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

inspired them with that inquietude for their country's safety which they would never have felt for their own. Nations, like individuals, never yet withdrew from the ways of error, but by the path of suffering; the sins of the fathers are still visited upon the children. The retreat of Sir John Moore was the transition from the paralysed timidity which refused succours to the Russians after Eylau, to the invincible tenacity which gave durable success to Wellington's campaigns. Happy the nation which can purchase absolution for past errors by so trivial a sacrifice—which can span the gulf from disaster to victory with no greater losses than those sustained in the Corunna retreat: and to whom the path of the necessary suffering, commencing by the gift of a momentous benefit, is terminated by a ray of imperishable glory!

71.
Reflections
on the cha-
racter of the
British and
French
armies.
Superiority
of the former
in fighting.

The peculiar character of the British and French troops had already clearly manifested itself in the course of this brief but active campaign. In every regular engagement from first to last, the English had proved successful; they had triumphed equally over the conscripts of Junot and the Imperial Guards of Bessières; the heroes of Austerlitz and Friedland had quailed and sunk beneath the British steel. Considering how inexperienced almost all the English regiments were, and that most of the troops engaged at Rolica, Vimeira, and Corunna, there saw a shot fired for the first time in anger, these successes were extremely remarkable, achieved, as they were, sometimes over veteran troops of the enemy, always over those who had the discipline and experience gained by fifteen years of victory to direct their organisation and animate their spirits. They point evidently to what subsequent experience so clearly verified, a greater degree of courage at the decisive moment, arising either from some inherent peculiarity of race, or the animating influence of a free constitution and a long course of historic glory.

But in other respects the superiority of the enemy was manifest, and all the good effects of achieved victory were liable to be lost on the English army, by the want of due discipline and docility in the troops, or of remissness and inexperience on the part of the officers. Place them in a fair field in front of the enemy, and both would

honourably discharge their duty: but expose them to the fatigues of a campaign; subject them to the frozen snow or the dripping bivouac; require them to recede before the enemy, and bear the galling reproaches of a pursuer or ally in expectation of the time when the proper season for action should arrive, and it was evident that they had still much to learn in the military art. Above all, intoxication, the inherent national vice, too often loosened the bonds of discipline, and exposed the army to the most serious disasters. These disorders explain the calamities of Sir John Moore's retreat, and go far to excuse his gloomy presentiments as to the ultimate issue of the campaign. In sobriety, durable activity, perseverance under fatigue, care of their horses, versatility of talent, and cheerfulness in disaster, the French were evidently and painfully the superiors of their undaunted rivals; the British army could never, in the same time and with the same order, have made Napoleon's march from Madrid to Astorga. Such were the different excellencies of the two armies who were destined, in six successive campaigns, to emulate each other's virtues, and shun each other's defects; and such the aspect of the war when Great Britain, throwing off the unworthy timidity of former years, first descended as a principal into the fight, and Wellington, alternately the Fabius and Marcellus of the contest, prepared, in the fields rendered illustrious by a former Scipio, the triumphs of a second Zama.

CHAP.
LV.

1809.

72.

And of the
French as
yet in the
other duties
of a cam-
paign.

CHAPTER LVI.

CAMPAIGN OF ABENSBERG, LANDSHUT, AND ECHMUHL.

CHAP.
LVI.

1808.

1.
Influence of
the aristo-
cratic and
democratic
principles on
the contend-
ing parties in
Europe.

As the history of Europe, during the eventful years which succeeded the French Revolution, contains, in the domestic transactions of every state possessing the shadow even of free institutions, a perpetual recurrence of the strife between the aristocratic and democratic principles ; so the military annals of the same period illustrate the effect of these opposite powers on the course of external events, and the issue of warlike operations. In the results of military operations, not less than the consequences of social convulsion, we perceive the influence of the same antagonist principles : the long-continued successes of the one, not less than the persevering firmness of the other, illustrate the action of those great contending powers which in every age have divided between them the government of mankind. France, buoyant with the energy, and radiant with the enthusiasm of a revolution, was for long triumphant ; but the fever of passion is transient, the suggestions of interest permanent in their effects ; and in the vehement exertions which the democratic principle there made, externally and internally, to achieve success, the foundation was necessarily laid for disappointment and change within, exhaustion and ultimate disaster without. Austria, less powerfully agitated in the outset, was directed by principles calculated to be more uniform in their operation, and more effective in the end. Recurring to the aid of popular enthusiasm only when driven to it by necessity, and

guided throughout by aristocratic foresight, she did not so soon wear out the mighty fire which shakes the world. Like a skilful combatant, she gave ground and yielded, till the strength of her antagonist had exhausted itself by exertion ; and thus succeeded at last, not only in appearing with undiminished strength on the theatre of combat, but rousing round her standard the still unexhausted vigour of popular excitation.

Since the gallant but unsuccessful attempt made by the Imperial government in 1805, the cabinet of Vienna had adhered with cautious prudence to a system of neutrality. Even the extraordinary temptation afforded by the disasters of the Polish campaign, and the opportunity, then arising, of striking a decisive blow when the forces of the East and the West were engaged in doubtful hostility on the banks of the Alle, had not been able to rouse it to immediate exertion. Austria armed, indeed, and assumed a menacing attitude, but not a sword was drawn. And the rapid termination of the contest by the disaster of Friedland, put an entire stop to any projects of hostility which a decided victory in that quarter by the Muscovite arms, or even the transfer of the war into the interior of Russia, might probably have induced them to entertain. But during this interval the government was not idle. Under the able guidance of the Archduke Charles, the war department assumed an extraordinary degree of activity ; the vast chasms which the campaigns of Ulm and Austerlitz had occasioned in the ranks were filled up by voluntary recruiting, or the prisoners who at length were restored by the French government ; and, with a patriotism and wisdom worthy of the highest admiration, the treasury, at the very time when the state was overburdened with the enormous contribution of four millions sterling, imposed by the victorious French troops, purchased from their retiring armies the greater part of the immense park of two thousand pieces of cannon, which they were removing from the arsenal of Vienna. During the whole of 1806 and 1807, the efforts of the war department were incessant to restore, without any ostentatious display, the horses of the cavalry and artillery, and replenish the arsenals and magazines, which had been nearly emptied by the consumption or spoliation of the last campaign. But

CHAP.
LVI.
1808.

2.
Policy of the
Imperial
cabinet since
the peace of
Presburg.

CHAP.
LVI.

1808.

¹ Ante, c. 39,
§ 55.

² Pelet,
Guerre de
1809, i. 36,
37. Der
Erzherzog
Johan, Feld-
zug in Jahre
1809, 8.

3.
Important
decree order-
ing the for-
mation of the
Landwehr
June 1808.

June 9.

the attention of the Archduke was, in an especial manner, drawn to the remodelling of the infantry, the real basis of all powerful military establishments. The French organisation into *corps d'armée*, under the command of marshals, and divisions under them of generals, each with a certain proportion of cavalry and artillery, so as to render it a little army complete in itself—that admirable system, which Napoleon had adopted from the ancient conquerors of the world—was introduced into the Imperial service.¹ At the same time the younger and more ardent officers, with the Archduke John at their head, eagerly supported still more energetic steps; formed plans of national defence and internal communication; warmly recommended the adoption of measures calculated to rouse the national enthusiasm in the public defence; and already contemplated those heroic sacrifices in the event of another invasion, which afterwards, under Wellington in Portugal, and Alexander in Russia, led to such memorable results.²

It was the presence of the Grand Army of France, two hundred thousand strong, in the north and west of Germany, which long overawed the Imperial government, and prevented the adoption of any steps which could give umbrage to Napoleon. But with the transfer of a large part of that immense force to the Peninsula, after the breaking out of the war in that direction, this oppressive load was materially diminished. The able statesmen who directed the Imperial councils, immediately perceived that a powerful diversion was now likely to be made in the quarter where the French Emperor least expected it, and where he was most desirous of obtaining solid support. They readily anticipated that England would not be slow in availing herself of this unexpected revolution of fortune in her favour, and descending in strength upon that theatre of warfare where the sea would prove the best possible base for military operations, and the scanty internal resources of the country would render it impossible to keep the armies of France together for any length of time in sufficient strength for their expulsion. In order to be in a situation to improve any chances which might thus arise in their favour, the cabinet

of Vienna no sooner heard of the breaking out of the Spanish contest, than they issued a decree by which a militia, raised by conscription, under the name of the *LANDWEHR*, was instituted. The general enthusiasm in favour of the monarchy, about, it was hoped, to resume its place among the European powers, soon raised this admirable force from two hundred thousand, the number fixed by the law for its German possessions, to three hundred thousand men. In addition to this, the Hungarian Diet voted twelve thousand recruits for the regular army for the year 1807, and eighty thousand for 1808; besides an insurrection, or levy *en masse*, of eighty thousand men, of whom thirty thousand were excellent cavalry. These immense military preparations, in addition to a regular standing army now raised to three hundred and fifty thousand men, were sufficient to demonstrate the existence of some great national project; and they were rendered still more formidable by the activity which prevailed in completing the remounting of the cavalry and artillery, and arming the fortresses, both on the frontier and in the interior; as well as the enthusiastic feelings which this universal sound of military preparation had awakened in all classes of the monarchy.¹

Napoleon was no sooner informed of these serious military changes, than he addressed the most pressing remonstrances to the Imperial cabinet: and, in the midst of the increasing intricacy of the Peninsular affairs, and all the whirl of a rapid journey from Bayonne, by Bordeaux, to Paris, repeatedly demanded a categorical explanation of armaments so well calculated to disturb the peace of Europe. At the same time he addressed a circular to the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, in which he called on them "to make ready their contingents, and prevent a war without a pretext, as without an object, by showing to Austria that they were prepared for it." No sooner had he arrived in his capital than he addressed a public remonstrance on the same subject to Metternich the Austrian ambassador, in presence of all the diplomatists of Europe. The Imperial government made loud professions of pacific intentions, but did not for an hour discontinue their military prepara-

CHAP.
LVI.
1808.

¹ Pelet, 37, 38. Hard. x. 296, 297. Erz. Johan. Feldzug 1809, 10, 12. Jom. ii. 138, 141.

4.
Napoleon's remonstrances against these measures. July 24.

Aug. 15.

CHAP.
LVI.

1808.

¹ Pelet, i. 39,
40. IIard. x.
295, 296.

5.
Deceitful
pacific pro-
fessions of
Austria at
Erfurth.

Oct. 14.
² Thib. v.
200, 201.
Pelet, i. 42,
47.

tions. Napoleon was not deceived: the coincidence of these formidable armaments with the insurrection in Spain, and the disasters of Vimeira and Baylen, was too evident to escape the most ordinary sagacity; but he dissembled his resentment, and contented himself with ordering the princes of the Confederation to keep their contingents together, and strengthening to the utmost the armies in Germany, so as to replace the veterans who were withdrawn in such numbers for the war in the Peninsula.¹

It was in a great measure to overawe Austria, that Napoleon pressed the Emperor Alexander to meet him at Erfurth; and he flattered himself, that however tempting the opportunity afforded by the Spanish insurrection might be, the cabinet of Vienna would hesitate before they engaged in hostilities with the two most powerful military states of the Continent. The preparations of Austria being not yet complete, it was deemed advisable to gain time; and in order to accomplish this object M. de Vincent was despatched with a letter to the coalesced Emperors in that city, so full of protestations of amity that Napoleon authorised the princes of the Confederation to dismiss their contingents, with the advice merely to reassemble them as soon as Austria resumed her hostile attitude.* To the Emperor Francis he returned an answer, earnestly counselling moderation and pacific views;† and having thus, as he hoped, dispelled the cloud which threatened to burst in the east of Germany, or at least delayed its bursting, he by a formal decree dissolved the Grand Army, and directed a considerable part of the troops composing it, particularly the corps of Soult and Ney, with the Imperial Guards, to Spain, where they achieved the successes which have already been detailed.²

* "He flattered himself that the Emperor Napoleon had never ceased to be convinced, that if false insinuations, in regard to the organic changes which he had deemed it necessary to introduce into his monarchy, had for a moment thrown doubts on the continuance of his amicable relations, the explanations which Count Metternich had made on that subject had entirely dissipated them. The Baron Vincent was charged to confirm them, and to afford every explanation that could be desired."—FRANCIS to NAPOLEON, 21st Sept. 1808; SCHOELL, ix. 218.

† "He could assure his Imperial Majesty, that he was seriously afraid he should see hostilities renewed; the war faction had pushed Austria to the most violent measures, and threatened misfortunes even greater than the preceding ones. If, however, the measures of the Emperor Francis were such as to indicate confi-

Notwithstanding the disasters, however, which befel the Spaniards, the cabinet of Vienna was not discouraged. During the winter, measures evidently indicating a hostile spirit, were adopted; the harbour of Trieste was opened to the English and Spanish flag; large purchases of arms were there made by the agents of the insurgents; articles hostile to Napoleon began to appear in the public journals, which, being all under the control of the police, indicated more or less the disposition of government; and the Austrian ambassador declined to accede to a proposal made at Paris by Count Romanzoff, for the conclusion of a treaty, involving a triple guarantee between the courts of St Petersburg, Vienna, and the Tuileries. Secret amicable relations had been established with Great Britain—the common refuge of all those on the Continent, however hostilely disposed in former times, who found the tyranny of France growing insupportable. But though the cabinet of St James's tendered the offer of their assistance in subsidies, they strongly counselled the Imperial government not to take the irrevocable step, unless the resources of the monarchy were clearly equal to the struggle which awaited them. But the vigour of the English administration, notwithstanding their prudent advice, was such as eminently to inspire confidence; the spectacle of fifty thousand British soldiers taking the field, in the Peninsular campaigns, was as unusual as it was animating, and promised a diversion of a very different kind from those which had terminated in such disaster on the plains of Flanders and the bay of Quiberon. At length there appeared, in the middle of December, a declaration of the King of England, which openly alluded to the hostile preparations of Austria, and assigned the prejudicial effect of Great Britain withdrawing at such a moment from the contest, as a powerful reason for declining the mediation

CHAP
LVI.

1808.

6.

Intelligence
of the pre-
parations
of Austria
induces
Napoleon to
halt in Spain
and return to
Paris.

Dec. 16.

dence, they would inspire it. Truth and simplicity have now become the best politicians; he had communicated to him his apprehensions, in order that they might be instantly dissipated: when he had it in his power to have dismembered the Austrian dominions, he had not done so: he was ever ready, on the contrary, to guarantee their integrity. The last levy *en masse* would have occasioned a war, if he had believed it was raised in concert with Russia. He had just disbanded the camp of the Confederation of the Rhine: one hundred thousand of his troops were about to renew their threatening attitude against England.—Let your Imperial Majesty, therefore, abstain from all hostile armaments which can give umbrage to the French cabinet, or operate as a diversion in favour of Great Britain."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 73, 74.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

Jan. 15.

¹ Ante, c. liv.
§ 47. Thib.
vii. 200, 202.
Hard. x. 297,
298. Pelet.
i. 45, 48.

7.
Division of
opinion in the
Austrian
cabinet on
the war.

of France and Russia, offered at Erfurth ; * and the same courier, who, on the 1st January 1809, brought this important state paper to Napoleon, conveyed at the same time decisive intelligence in regard to the hostile preparations and general movement in the Austrian states. He immediately halted, as already mentioned, at Astorga ; returned with extraordinary expedition to Valladolid, where he shut himself up for two days with Maret, his minister for foreign affairs ; despatched eighty-four messengers in different directions, with orders to concentrate his forces in Germany, and call out the full contingents of the Rhenish confederacy ; and returned himself without delay to Paris.¹

The Austrian cabinet, meanwhile, notwithstanding their hostile preparations, were as yet undecided as to the course which they should finally adopt. The extreme peril which the monarchy had already undergone in the wars with Napoleon, as well as the uncertain nature of the diversion which they could expect from so tumultuary a force as the Spanish insurrection, naturally excited the most anxious solicitude, and induced many of the warmest and wisest patriots to pause before they engaged in a contest, which, if unsuccessful, might prove the last which the country might ever have to sustain. Opinions were much divided, not only in the cabinet but the nation, on the subject. At the head of the party inclined to preserve peace, was the Archduke Charles, whose great military exploits and able administration as director of the war department, necessarily gave his opinion the greatest weight, and who had felt too frequently the weight of the French arms not to appreciate fully the danger of again provoking their hostility. On the other hand, the war party found an able and energetic advocate in Count STADION,† the prime minister,

* "If, among the nations who maintain against France a precarious and doubtful independence, there are any who, at this moment, hesitate between the ruin which will result from a prolonged inaction and the contingent dangers which may arise from a courageous effort to escape from it, the deceitful prospect of a peace between Great Britain and France could not fail to be singularly disastrous. The vain hope of a return of tranquillity might suspend their preparations, or the fear of being abandoned to their own resources shake their resolution."—16th Dec. 1808, *King's Speech, Parl. Deb.*

† Philippe, Count de Stadion, was born at Mentz on the 18th June 1763, of an old and distinguished family of Upper Rhætia, whose members had for generations been in the public service of the House of Austria. He received the rudiments of his education at Gottingen, and entered the Imperial diplomatic service at a

who was cordially seconded by the majority of the nobility, and ardently supported by the great body of the people. It was known also that the Emperor himself inclined to the same opinion. The question was vehemently argued, not only in the cabinet but in all the private circles of the metropolis.

On the one hand it was argued that the military preparations of the monarchy were still incomplete, and its finances in the most deplorable state of confusion; that Prussia, whatever her inclination might be, was incapable of rendering any efficient assistance, and Russia too closely united with the French Emperor for any hope to remain of her co-operation; that the Spanish insurgents could not be expected long to hold out against the immense forces which Napoleon had now directed against them, and accordingly had been defeated in every encounter since he in person directed the movements of his troops; and the English auxiliaries, deprived of the solid base of Peninsular co-operation, would necessarily be driven, as on former occasions, to their ships. What madness, then, for the sake of a transient and uncertain success, to incur a certain and unavoidable danger, and expose the Austrian monarchy alone and unaided, as it would soon be, to the blows of a conqueror too strongly irritated to

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

8.
Arguments
used on both
sides.

very early age, under the auspices of the veteran Kaunitz, who sent him, at the age of twenty-four, to Sweden, with the power of Imperial plenipotentiary. In 1792, he was sent by Baron Thugut, then prime-minister of the cabinet of Vienna, to London with the same appointment; but as the more important duties of the English embassy were at the same period entrusted to M. Merey d'Argenteau, Stadion took offence, and resigning his appointment retired to his estates in Swabia. He was there made grand-treasurer of the Bishopric of Wurtzburg; and he represented the elector of Mentz at the congress of Rastadt in 1802, when the principle of confiscating the ecclesiastical property for the benefit of the secular princes was so largely acted on. He there defended the interests of his master the Bishop of Wurtzburg, who was threatened with spoliation, with so much ability and judgment, that the cabinet of Vienna, which ever has its eye on rising ability for the diplomatic service, again took him into its employment, and he was sent as ambassador to Berlin in 1801. He discharged the duties of that situation with so much ability that, after holding it for two years, he was sent on the still more important mission of ambassador to St Petersburg. In that capacity he had the principal share in conducting at that capital the formation of the grand alliance, which terminated so fatally for Austria by the battle of Austerlitz and treaty of Presburg. After that he was appointed to the important situation of minister of foreign affairs at Vienna—an office of difficulty at all times, but peculiarly so at that juncture, from the depressed condition of Austria among the European powers. He conducted himself in that responsible and thorny situation with equal judgment and ability; and when Austria again took up arms in 1809, he acquired the principal lead in the important measures which attended the contest. He was a minister of a firm and intrepid character; devoted to his country, ardent in his disposition, and on that account a decided opponent through life of the grasping and domineering ambition of France. See *Biographie Universelle*, xliii., 389, STADION.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

allow the hope that, after disaster, moderate terms would again be allowed to the vanquished! On the other hand it was strongly contended, that so favourable an opportunity of reinstating the empire in the rank it formerly held in Europe could never again be looked for, and was in fact more advantageous than could possibly have been expected; that the great majority of the French veteran troops had been directed to the Peninsula, and were now either buried in the mountains of Galicia, or inextricably involved in the heart of Spain; that sixty thousand French conscripts alone remained in Germany, and the Rhenish confederates could not be relied on to adhere to the stranger when the standards of the Fatherland were openly unfurled; that the confusion of the finances was of no importance, when the subsidies of England might with certainty be expected to furnish the necessary supplies, and the incompleteness of the military preparations of little moment, when the now awakened fervour of the nation was attracting all ranks in crowds to the national standard; that it was in vain to refer to the long dreaded prowess of the French armies, when the disaster of Baylen and the defeat of Vimeira had dispelled the charm of their invincibility; that there could be no question that the hour of Europe's deliverance was approaching; the only question was, whether Austria was to remain passive during the strife, and bear no part either in the glories by which it was to be achieved, or the spoils with which it would be attended. These considerations, speaking as they did to the generous and enthusiastic feelings of our nature, and supported by the great influence of the Emperor, the ministry, and the principal nobility, at length prevailed over the cautious reserve and prudent foresight of the Archduke Charles, and war was resolved on. In truth, the public fervour had risen to such a height, that it could no longer be delayed; and, like many other of the most important steps in the history of all nations, its consequences, be they good or bad, were unavoidable.¹

¹ Erz. Johan. Feld. 1809, 24, 27. Pelet, I. 59, 61.

The French forces in Germany, when the contest was thus renewed, were far from being considerable; and it was chiefly an exaggerated impression of the extent to which they had been reduced, which led the cabinet of

Vienna, at that period, to throw off the mask. The total amount, in September 1808, on paper, was one hundred and sixty thousand men, of whom forty thousand were cavalry; but the number actually present with the eagles did not exceed a hundred and forty thousand, of whom only a hundred and ten thousand were native French, the remainder being Poles, Saxons, and Dutch. After the departure of three divisions of Soult's corps for the Peninsula in the end of October, the remainder, eighty thousand strong, assumed the name of the army of the Rhine, and were quartered at Magdeburg, Bayreuth, Hanover, and Stettin, and in the fortresses on the Oder. But to this force of Imperial France there was to be added nearly one hundred thousand men from the Rhenish confederacy; so that, after making every allowance for detachments and garrisons, a hundred and fifty thousand men might be relied on for active operations on the Inn or in the valley of the Danube.¹

The Imperial cabinet made the utmost efforts to obtain the accession of Russia to the new confederacy; and for this purpose despatched a young officer of diplomatic talent, engaging address, and noble figure, reserved for exalted destinies in future times, PRINCE SCHWARTZENBERG, to St Petersburg. Stadion had been previously made aware, by secret communications from Baron Stein, the Duke de Serra Capriola, and others, that, notwithstanding Alexander's chivalrous admiration of Napoleon, he still retained at bottom the same opinions as to the necessity of ultimately joining in the confederacy for the deliverance of Europe; and he was not without hopes that the present opportunity, when so large a portion of the French armies were engaged in the Peninsula, would appear to the cabinet of St Petersburg a fair one for taking the lead in the great undertaking. But all the efforts of Schwartzenberg were in vain. Alexander had given his word to the French Emperor; and though capable of the utmost dissimulation so far as the mere obligations of cabinets were concerned, the Czar was scrupulously faithful to any personal engagements which he had undertaken. He was occupied, moreover, with great schemes of ambition both on his northern and southern frontier, and little inclined to forego present

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

9.

Amount and distribution of the French forces in Germany, in spring 1809.

¹ Stutterheim, Feld. 1809, 19, 20. Pelet, 43, 44.

10.

Efforts of Austria to obtain the accession of Russia to the confederacy.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Hard. x.
299, 302.
Pelet, i. 67,
68. Bout. i.
24, 58.

11.
Prussia re-
solves to
remain
neutral.

² Ante, c. ii.
§ 14.

Jan. 1809.

³ Ante, c.
iv. § 11.

⁴ Hard. x.
299. Pelet,
i. 65, 67.

and certain conquests in Finland and Moldavia, for the problematical advantages of a contest in the heart of Germany. All attempts to engage Russia in the confederacy, therefore, proved abortive; and the utmost which the Austrian envoy could obtain from the imperial cabinet, was a secret assurance that Russia, if compelled to take a part in the strife, would not at least bring forward any formidable force against the Austrian legions.¹

The cabinet of Berlin had no objects of present ambition to obtain by remaining quiescent during the approaching conflict; and the wrongs of Tilsit were too recent and serious not to have left the strongest desire for liberation and vengeance in every Prussian heart. No sooner, therefore, had it become manifest that Austria was arming, than public feeling became strongly excited in all the Prussian states, and the government was violently urged by a powerful party, both in and out of the cabinet, to seize the present favourable opportunity of regaining its lost provinces, and resuming its place among the powers of Europe. Scharnhorst, the minister at war, strongly supported the bolder policy; and offered to place at the disposal of the King, by his admirable system of temporary service,² no less than one hundred and twenty thousand men, instead of the forty thousand which they were alone permitted to have under arms. But the government was restrained from giving vent to its wishes, not merely by prudential considerations, but by a sense of gratitude. The visit of the King and the Queen to St Petersburg in the preceding spring, had renewed the bonds of amity by which they were united to the Emperor Alexander: they had obtained a considerable remission of tribute, and relaxation of the hardships of the treaty of Tilsit, from his intercession;³ and they felt that, though they never could be indifferent spectators of the Austrian efforts, they could not with safety take a part in them, until the intentions of Russia were declared. They resolved, therefore, to remain neutral; and thus had Napoleon again the extraordinary good fortune, through his own address or the jealousies or timidity of the other potentates,⁴ of engaging a *fourth* time in mortal conflict with one of the great European

powers while the other two were mere spectators of the strife.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

12.

General
effervescence
in Germany
in aid of the
Austrian
cause.

But, though refused all co-operation from the European cabinets, the court of Vienna was not without hopes of obtaining powerful succours from the Germanic people. The Tugendbund or Burchenschaft, which had spread its ramifications as far as indignation at French oppression was felt in the north and east of Germany, had already formed a secret league against the oppressor, independent of the agreements of cabinets; and thousands of brave men in Westphalia, Cassel, Saxony, and the Prussian states, animated by the example of the Spanish patriots, were prepared to start up in arms for the defence of the Fatherland, as soon as the Imperial standards crossed the Inn. The peasants of the Tyrol, whose ardent and hereditary attachment to the House of Hapsburg had been rendered still more enthusiastic by the bitter experience they had had of their treatment as aliens and enemies by the Bavarian government, longed passionately to rejoin the much-loved Austrian dominion; and the first battalion of the Imperial troops which crossed the Salzburg frontier would, it was well known, at once rouse twenty thousand brave mountaineers into desperate and formidable hostility. The cabinet of Vienna, despite its aristocratic prepossessions, was prepared to take full advantage of these favourable dispositions; and, impelled by necessity, not only maintained in secret an active correspondence with the numerous malcontents in the adjoining provinces, who panted for the moment of German deliverance, but was prepared, the moment hostilities were commenced, to call upon them by animated proclamations to repair to its standards, and determine, by a vigorous popular demonstration, the uncertainty or vacillations of their respective governments. Thus had the energy of general enthusiasm in the course of the contest already come to change sides. While France, resting on the coalitions of cabinets and the force of disciplined armies, was sternly repressing, in every direction, the fervour of national exertion, Spain and Austria openly invoked the aid of popular enthusiasm, and loudly proclaimed the right of mankind, when oppression had reached a certain point,¹ to redress their own

¹ Pelet, i. 71,
79. Erz.
Johan. Feld.
52, 54.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

13.
Character of
Metternich,
the Austrian
ambassador
at Paris.

wrongs, and take the lead in the achievement of their own deliverance.*

Meanwhile the Austrian ambassador at Paris had the difficult task to discharge, of maintaining apparently amicable relations with the French government at the time when his cabinet were openly preparing the means of decided hostility. But the BARON METTERNICH, who then filled that important situation at the court of Napoleon was a man whose abilities were equal to the task. A statesman, in the widest acceptation of the word, gifted with a sagacious intellect, a clear perception, a sound judgment; profoundly versed in the secrets of diplomacy, and the characters of the leading political men with whom he was brought in contact in the different European cabinets; persevering in his policy, far-seeing in his views, unrivalled in his discrimination, and at the same time skilful in concealing these varied qualities; a perfect master of dissimulation in public affairs, and yet honourable and candid in private life; capable of acquiring information from others, at the very moment when he was eluding all similar investigations by them; unbounded in application, richly endowed with knowledge, he also enjoyed the rare faculty of veiling these great acquirements under the cover of polished manners, and causing his superiority to be forgotten in the charms of a varied and intellectual conversation. These admirable abilities were fully appreciated at Berlin, where he had formerly been ambassador; but they excited jealousy and distrust among the diplomatists of Paris, who, seeing in the new representative of the Caesars, qualities which they were not accustomed to in his predecessors, and unable either to overcome his caution or divine his intentions, launched forth into invectives against his character, and put a forced or malevolent construction upon his most inconsiderable actions.¹

¹ Hard. x.
302, 303.
D'Abr. xvi.
174, 175.

* Napoleon loudly accused the cabinet of Vienna of insurrectionary iniquity, in thus fomenting popular efforts against the armies of Imperial France. "Austria," said the *Moniteur*, "has adopted the revolutionary system: she has no right now to complain of the conduct of the Convention, in proclaiming war to the palace and peace to the cottage. A plan has been organised at Vienna for a general insurrection over all Europe, the execution of which is confided to the ardent zeal of the princes of the House of Austria, propagated by the proclamations of its generals, and diffused by its detachments at the distance of two hundred leagues from its armies. The leading characteristic of that system is, the *terror* universally spread by the Austrian generals, to excite by main force that revolution."—*Moniteur*, No. 239, 1809; and *PELET*, i. 79.

Notwithstanding all his caution and diplomatic address, however, the Austrian ambassador could not blind the French Emperor to the preparations which were going forward. In a public audience of the envoys of the principal European powers at Paris, he openly charged the cabinet of Vienna with hostile designs; and Metternich, who could not deny them, had no alternative but to protest that they were defensive only, and rendered necessary by the hostile attitude of the princes of the Rhenish confederacy, to whom Napoleon had recently transmitted orders to call out their contingents.* In truth, however, though loud complaints of hostile preparations were made on both sides, neither party was desirous to precipitate the commencement of active operations. Austria had need of every hour she could gain to complete her armaments, and draw together her troops upon the frontier from the various quarters of her extensive dominions; and Napoleon had as much occasion for delay, to concentrate his forces from the north and centre of Germany in the valley of the Danube; and he was desirous not to unsheath the sword till advices from St Petersburg made him certain of the concurrence of Alexander in his designs. At length the long-wished for despatches arrived, and relieved him of all anxiety by announcing the mission of Prince Schwartzemberg to St Petersburg, the refusal of the cabinet of Russia to accede to his proposals, and its determination to support Napoleon in the war with

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

14.

Angry inter-
change of
notes
between the
French and
Austrian
courts.
Feb. 17.

Feb. 19.

* "Well," said Napoleon, "M. Metternich, here are fine news from Vienna! What does all this mean? Have they been stung by scorpions? Who threatens you? What would you be at? As long as I had my army in Germany you conceived no disquietude for your existence; but the moment it was transferred to Spain you consider yourselves endangered! What can be the end of these things? What, but that I must arm as you arm, for at length I am seriously menaced? I am rightly punished for my former caution. Have you, sir, communicated your pretended apprehensions to your court? if you have done so, you have disturbed the peace of mine, and will probably plunge Europe into numberless calamities. I have always been the dupe of your court in diplomacy; we must now speak out; it is making too much noise for the preservation of peace, too little for the prosecution of war. Do they suppose me dead? We shall see how their projects will succeed; and they will reproach me with being the cause of hostilities, when it is their own folly which forces me to engage in them. But let them not imagine they will have war to carry on with me alone; I expect a courier from Russia; if matters turn out there as I expect, I shall give them fighting enough." How easily may Napoleon's ideas and words be always distinguished from those of all other men! At least he always lets us understand his meaning; no inconsiderable advantage, in the midst of the general studied obscurity and evasions of diplomatic language.—See THIBAUDEAU, vii. 204, 205.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

Feb. 28.

¹ Thib. vii.

205, 206.

Hard. x. 303,

304. Pelet,

i. 117, 119.

Stat. 14, 20.

Austria which was approaching. Orders were immediately despatched for the French ambassador to leave Vienna, who accordingly took his departure on the last day of February, leaving only a chargé-d'affaires to communicate intelligence till relations were finally broken off; and though Metternich still remained at Paris, his departure was hourly expected; and such was the estrangement of the Emperor, that he never addressed to him a word, even in public and formal diplomatic intercourse.¹

15.
Deep um-
brage taken
by Austria at
the confer-
ence of
Erfurth.

In the course of his discussions with Champagny, the French minister for foreign affairs at this period, Metternich, with all his caution, could not disguise the deep umbrage taken by Austria at not having been invited to take part in the conferences of Erfurth; and he admitted, that, if this had been done, the cabinet of Vienna would in all probability have recognised Joseph as King of Spain, and the rupture would have been entirely prevented. In truth, Austria had good reason to anticipate evil to herself from the ominous conjunction of two such powers in her neighbourhood; while at the same time, the cordiality of Alexander would unquestionably have cooled if Francis or Metternich had been admitted to these deliberations. Napoleon's favour was too precious to be divided between two potentates without exciting jealousy: like a beauty surrounded by lovers, he could not show a preference to one without producing estrangement of the other. He chose for his intimate ally the power of whose strength he had had the most convincing experience, and from whose hostility he had, from its distance, least to apprehend.²

² Thib. vii.
207.

16.
Measures for
the concentra-
tion of the
French army.
March 4.

Meanwhile, Napoleon was rapidly completing his arrangements. Orders were despatched to Davoust early in March to concentrate his immense corps at Bamberg, and establish the headquarters of the whole army at Wurtzburg; Massena, at the same time, received directions to repair to Strasburg, and press on with his corps to Ulm, and there unite with the army of the Rhine; Oudinot was moved upon Augsburg; Bernadotte despatched to Dresden to take the command of the Saxons; Bessières, with the Imperial Guard, transported by post in all imaginable haste from Burgos across the Pyrenees and

Rhine ; instructions were transmitted to the French ambassador at Warsaw to hasten the formation of three Polish divisions, to co-operate with the Russians in protecting the Grand-duchy of Warsaw and menacing Galicia ; while the princes of the Rhenish confederacy were enjoined to collect their respective contingents at their different rallying points, and direct them towards the general rendezvous of this immense force on the Danube, at Ingolstadt or Donauwerth. Thus, from all quarters of Europe, from the mountains of Asturias to the plains of Poland, armed men were converging in all directions to the valley of the Danube, where a hundred and fifty thousand soldiers would ere long be collected ; while the provident care of the Emperor was not less actively exerted in collecting magazines upon the projected line of operations for the stupendous multitude, and providing, in the arming and replenishing of the fortresses, both a base for offensive operations, and a refuge in the improbable event of disaster.¹

On the side of the Austrians, preparations not less threatening were going rapidly forward. The regular army had been augmented to three hundred thousand infantry and above thirty thousand cavalry ; besides two hundred thousand of the landwehr and Hungarian insurrection. The disposable force was divided into nine corps, besides two of reserve. Six of these, containing nominally one hundred and fifty thousand men, of whom one hundred and twenty thousand might be relied on as able to assemble round the standards, were mustered on the frontiers of Bavaria, besides a reserve in Bohemia, under the immediate command of the Archduke Charles. The Archduke John was intrusted with the direction of two others, forty-seven thousand strong, in Italy, supported by the landwehr of Carinthia, Carniola, and Istria, at least twenty-five thousand more, who, though hardly equal to a shock in the field, were of great value in garrisoning fortresses and conducting secondary operations ; the Marquis Chastellar was prepared to enter the eastern frontier of the Tyrol from the Pusterthal, with twelve thousand regular troops, where he expected to be immediately joined by twenty thousand hardy and warlike peasants ; while the Archduke Ferdinand, with thirty thousand infantry and

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Thib. vii.
206. Pelet,
i. 119, 126.
Stat. 26, 29.

17.
Preparations
and forces of
Austria.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

five thousand cavalry, was to invade the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, and avert the calamities of war from the Galician plains. The total number of troops, after deducting the non-effective and sick, might amount to two hundred and twenty thousand infantry and twenty-eight thousand cavalry, with eight hundred pieces of cannon: a prodigious force, when their discipline and efficiency were taken into consideration, and the support which they were to receive, not only from the immense reserves of landwehr in all the provinces, but from the general spirit and unanimity of the monarchy. The commencement of hostilities at once in Bavaria, Italy, the Tyrol, and Poland, might seem an imprudent dispersion of strength, especially when the tremendous blows to be anticipated from Napoleon in the valley of the Danube are duly weighed; but these, in appearance offensive, were in reality strictly defensive operations. It was well known that the moment war was declared, the French Emperor, according to his usual policy, would direct all his forces against the centre of the enemy's power; invasion from Italy, Bavaria, and Poland was immediately to be anticipated; and in maintaining the struggle in the hostile provinces adjoining the frontier, the war was in reality averted from their own vitals.^{1*}

¹ Stat. 34,
40. Pelet, l.
166, 173.
Jom. iii.
140.

18.
Spirit which
animated all
classes of the
Austrian
empire.

² Stat. 34,
41. Erz.
Johan. Feld.
29, 34. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
203, 204.

The utmost efforts were at the same time made to rouse the patriotic ardour of all classes, and government in that important duty were magnanimously seconded by the nobles and people throughout the empire. Never, indeed, since the foundation of the monarchy, had unanimity so universal prevailed through all the varied provinces of the Imperial dominions, and never had so enthusiastic a spirit animated all ranks of the people. The nobles, the clergy, the peasants, the burghers, all felt the sacred flame, and vied with each other in devotion to the common cause. The requisitions of government were instantly agreed to; the supplies of men and money cheerfully voted; the levies for the regular army anticipated by voluntary enrolment; the landwehr rapidly filled up with brave and hardy peasants. At Vienna, in particular, the patriotic ardour was unbounded;² and when the Archduke Charles, on the 6th April, marched into the city at the

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LVI.

head of his regiment, one swell of rapture seemed to animate the whole population. That accomplished prince aided the general ardour by an address to his soldiers on the day of his entry, which deserves to be recorded for the generous sentiments which it expresses, as well as the light which it throws on the general reasons for the war.*

While these immense military preparations were going on upon both sides, the semblance of diplomatic relations was still kept up at Paris. Metternich, who remained there to the last, rather as a legitimate spy than in any other character, presented a note to the cabinet of the Tuileries on the 10th March. He there represented it as an undoubted fact, that since the treaty which followed the evacuation of Brannau, there was no longer any subject of difference between the two powers; and that, although the Emperor of Austria might well conceive disquietude at the numerous movements which had taken place since January, he had no desire except to see Europe in peace. The French cabinet replied, that unquestionably no subject of difference remained between the two powers;¹ and that, this being the case, the Emperor

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

19.

Last diplomatic communications at Paris. March 10.

March 12.
¹ Thib. vii.
207, 208.

* "When all endeavours to preserve independence from the insatiable ambition of a foreign conqueror prove fruitless, when nations are falling around us, and when lawful sovereigns are torn from the hearts of their subjects; when, in fine, the danger of universal subjugation threatens even the happy states of Austria, and their peaceable fortunate inhabitants, then does our country demand its deliverance from us, and we stand forth in its defence. On you, my brother-soldiers, are fixed the eyes of the universe, and of all those who still feel for national honour and national prosperity. You shall not incur the disgrace of being made the instruments of oppression; you shall not carry on the endless wars of ambition under distant climes; your blood shall never flow for foreign fleets or insatiable covetousness; nor on you shall the curse alight of annihilating distant nations, and over the bodies of the slaughtered defenders of their country, paving the way for a foreigner to a usurped throne. A happier lot awaits you; the liberty of Europe has taken refuge under your banners. Your victories will loose its fetters, and your brothers in Germany, yet in the ranks of the enemy, long for their deliverance. On the fields of Ulm and Marengo, of which the enemy so often reminds us with ostentatious pride, shall we renew the glorious deeds of Wurtzburg and Ostrach, of Stockach and Zurich, of Verona, Trebbia, and Novi. We shall conquer a lasting peace for our country; but that great end is not to be attained without proportionate virtues. Unconditional subordination, strict discipline, persevering courage, unshaken steadiness in danger, are the companions of true fortitude. Nothing but a union of will, and joint co-operation of the whole, can lead to victory. I will be every where in the midst of you; you shall receive the first thanks of your country from your general on the field of battle. The patriotism of the Austrian nobility has anticipated your wants: this is a pledge of the national gratitude. Adorned with the marks of the public esteem, will I present to our sovereign, to the world, those brave men who have deserved well of their country. Civil virtues must also accompany your arms out of the field of battle: the real soldier is moderate, compassionate, humane; he knows the evils of war, and strives to lighten them. It is not the intention of our monarch to oppress foreign nations, but to deliver them, and to form with their princes a lasting peace, and maintain the general welfare and security."—*Ann. Reg.* 1809, 691; *App. to Chron.*

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

20.
Austrian
plan of the
campaign.

could not conceive, either what the Austrians would be at, or what occasioned their pretended disquietudes. Here terminated this diplomatic farce: it deceived neither party; but both had objects to gain by postponing for a short time the commencement of hostilities.

The original plan of the Austrians was to invade at once Franconia, Lombardy, the Tyrol, and the Grand-duchy of Warsaw. In all these districts they had numerous and active partisans, and they confidently expected powerful aid from their exertions. For this purpose they had accumulated enormous masses of troops, above a hundred thousand strong, in Bohemia; from whence, as a central point, they were in a situation to issue in any direction which might seem advisable. They were, in March, grouped around Prague, in the north-western extremity of that country, between the Elbe, the Eger, the Moldava, and the Wittawa. The object of this extraordinary concentration of troops was, to advance suddenly into the country of Bayreuth, lend a helping hand to the numerous ardent spirits and malcontents of that quarter of Germany, fall upon Davoust's corps which was assembled at Wurtzburg, before it could receive the reinforcements which were hastening to its support, or be electrified by the presence of Napoleon, and, if possible, drive it back by superior forces to the Rhine.* Such an event, it was well known, would at once bring to the Austrian standards a vast body of ardent recruits, whom the enormous exactions and grinding tyranny of the French armies had filled with unbounded hatred at their dominion, and it was hoped would at the same time overcome the indecision of Prussia, and bring its disciplined battalions to the side of the Imperialists in the great contest for European freedom. This plan was ably conceived, and if carried into execution with the requisite alacrity and vigour, might have been attended with great results;¹ for the French armies were very much scattered

¹ Jom. ii.
152, 153.
Pelet, i. 189,
195. Stut.
40, 49.

* The directions of the Aulic Council for the war in Italy and the Tyrol, were to concentrate both corps, under the command of the Archduke John, between Villach and Klagenfurth, and then advance in two columns: one by the Pustertal into the Tyrol, and over the Brenner to Trent; the other by Ponteba to Bassano, and from thence to the Adige; while the care of observing the lower Isonzo was intrusted to the landwehr of Istria. The cabinet of Vienna calculated with much reason upon the expected insurrection in the Tyrol, to aid and support both these movements.—STUTTERHEIM, 56, 57; and PELET, i. 196.

in the end of February, and, by issuing suddenly from the great salient fortress of Bohemia, and pressing forward towards the Rhine, the Archduke Charles might have entirely separated Oudinot, who lay in Swabia, from Davoust, who was cantoned on the banks of the Maine.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

Feb. 27.

The Austrians had taken Napoleon, in a certain degree, at unawares; as not only was the flower of his veteran troops in Spain, but the forces which still remained in Germany, though extremely formidable if once assembled together, were scattered from the Alps to the Baltic, at a great distance from each other. His plan, therefore, contrary to his usual policy, was strictly defensive in the outset, to gain time for the concentration of his troops. At the same time, as he deemed it unfitting that he himself should be at the head of his army before any decisive blows were struck, and where, possibly, disasters might be incurred, Berthier was despatched early in April to assume the command of the whole until the arrival of the Emperor—a convenient arrangement, as, if his operations proved successful, they would, of course, be ascribed to the intelligence and ability of his superior in command; if the reverse, the whole blame of a miscarriage might be laid upon himself. From the period of his arrival, the whole troops, both French and those of the Confederation of the Rhine, were formed into one army, to be called the *army of Germany*. It was divided into eight corps,* commanded by the most distinguished marshals in the French service, and mustered two hundred thousand effective men. The Emperor was indefatigable in his efforts to provide subsistence, clothing, and ammuni-

21.
Plans of
Napoleon.
April 1.

* Second corps,	Marshal Lannes,	50,000 men
Third,	Davoust,	60,000
Fourth,	Massena,	50,000
Seventh,	Lefebvre,	34,000
Eighth,	Augereau,	20,000
Ninth, Saxon confederation and French,	Bernadotte,	50,000
Tenth, King of Westphalia,		25,000
Imperial Guard,		22,000
Reserve Cavalry,	Bessières,	14,000
		<hr/> 325,000 and

400 pieces of cannon.

But at least one hundred thousand of them had not yet arrived: the Guard and reserve cavalry were on their march from Spain; Bernadotte's corps was still at a distance in the north of Germany; and the contingents of the Confederation of the Rhine were far from being complete. Still a hundred and forty thousand French troops and sixty thousand of those of the Confederation might be relied on for active operations in the valley of the Danube.—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 214.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

Thib. vii.
214, 223.
Jom. iii. 152,
153. Stut.
58, 64.
Pelet, i. 197,
209.

22.
Commence-
ment of hos-
tilities by the
Austrians.

tion for this enormous multitude; among other things, twenty-five million ball-cartridges were collected. But he enjoined that the system should be rigorously followed out of making war support war, and strictly forbade any stores or provisions being purchased in France for the use of the troops, if they could be procured by requisitions or military contributions on the other side of the Rhine. Rapid concentration of his troops was enjoined to Berthier around the Lech; but no offensive operations were to be commenced before the arrival of the Emperor, who was expected about the middle of April. To all who were acquainted with the character of his movements, it was evident that the moment he arrived, and deemed himself in sufficient strength, he would commence a furious onset, and pour with concentrated masses down the valley of the Danube.¹

The cabinet of Vienna took the initiative. On the 8th of April, the Austrian troops crossed the frontiers at once on the Inn, in Bohemia, in the Tyrol, and in Italy. Had the original plan of the Aulic Council been followed out, and the Archduke Charles, at the head of a hundred thousand men, debouched from Bohemia, midway between the Maine and the Black Forest, and advanced towards Mannheim, this commencement of hostilities might have been attended with most important effects; for dissatisfaction with the French rule was universal in that quarter: and had a powerful demonstration from England, on the coast of Flanders, seconded this irruption, the seat of war might have been permanently fixed on the middle and lower Rhine.* On the 17th March, Austria had a hundred and forty thousand men on the two banks of the

* The instructions of the Aulic Council in the outset of the campaign were, "to advance in large masses, and attack the French army wherever it might assemble, either on the Maine, the Naab, or the Danube. Should a French corps enter Bavaria, the grand Austrian army was not to swerve from its direction, but trust to arresting the movement on Bavaria, by threatening the advancing corps on the side of Ratisbon or Donauwerth. If Marshal Davoust retired in order to avoid any engagement before the arrival of his reinforcements, the grand Austrian army was nevertheless to continue its advance with all possible expedition, and take up a central position between the Black Forest and the Maine, and there be regulated by the forces of the enemy, and the chances of successful operations which were afforded. The issue of the war depends on this operation, and on the issue of the first battle, which will, in all probability, if successful, rouse the malcontents of Bayreuth, overawe Saxony, and bring over to the standards of Austria great part of the troops of the Confederation of the Rhine which are now arrayed against her."—STUTTERHEIM, 64-69; PELET, i. 194.

**CHAP.
LVI.**

Danube, within eight days' march of Ratisbon ; while Davoust only broke up from his cantonments in the north of Germany, on the Oder and lower Elbe, on that day ; Massena was still on the Rhine, and Oudinot alone at Augsburg, the Bavarians being on the Iser. Thus the complete separation of the French corps was a matter of perfect certainty, by a rapid advance towards Mannheim at that period. But the successful execution of this well-conceived design required a vigour of determination and alacrity of execution to which the Austrians were as yet strangers ; and by hesitating till the period for striking the blow was past, and the French troops were concentrated on the Danube, Austria lost all the immense advantages of her central threatening position in Bohemia.¹

¹ Pelet, i.
190, 199.
Stut. 60, 65
Jom. i. 152
153.

When it was resolved to attack the French in Bavaria, the Aulic Council committed a second error, still greater than the former ; for instead of permitting the Archduke Charles, from his central position in Bohemia, to fall perpendicularly on the French corps, scattered to the south along the valley of the Danube, at the distance of only six or eight days' march, they ordered him to counter-march the great body of his forces, and open the campaign on the Inn ; a gratuitous fault, which gave his troops triple the distance to march, and the enemy triple the time to complete their preparations and concentrate their forces. At length, however, the toilsome and unnecessary countermarch was completed ; the Austrian columns, after being transported a hundred miles back towards Vicuna, and across the Danube, were arrayed in dense masses on the right bank of the Inn ; and the Archduke, crossing that river in imposing strength, prepared to carry the seat of war into the vast and level plains which stretch from the southern bank of the Danube to the foot of the Alps. At the same moment, the long wished for signals were given from the frontiers of Styria and Salzburg, to the provinces of the Tyrol. With speechless transport, the brave mountaineers beheld the bale-fires glowing on the eastern boundaries of their romantic country. Instantly a thousand beacons were kindled over all its rugged surface ; the cliffs of the Brenner were reddened by the glare, the waters of the Eisach reflected its light ;² and long before the ascending sun had

23.
Impolitic
delay in the
early move-
ments.

April 10.

² Jom. i. 152,
153. Thib.
vii. 221.
Pel. i. 191,
205. Stut.
60, 64.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

24.
First move-
ments of the
Austrians,
and immin-
ent danger of
the French.

spread his rosy tint over the glaciers of the Glockner, the inhabitants of the icy steepes were warmed by the glow, which, at the voice of patriotism, called a nation of heroes to arms.

The instructions of Napoleon to Berthier,* before leaving Paris, were clear and precise; viz. that if the enemy commenced his attack before the 15th, by which time it was calculated the bulk of his forces might be assembled around Ratisbon, the army was to be concentrated on the Lech around Donauwerth; if after that date, at Ratisbon, guarding the right bank of the Danube from it to Passau. On the 12th, however, by means of the telegraph which the Emperor had established in central Germany, he was apprised at Paris of the crossing of the Inn by the Archduke and the commencement of hostilities. He instantly set out: and with such precision were the movements of the immense force, which was converging from the mountains of Galicia and the banks of the Oder to the valley of the Danube, calculated, that the last arrived at the general point of rendezvous around Ratisbon, at the very moment when the Emperor was approaching from Paris. It was high time that he should arrive to take the command of the army; for, in the interim, Berthier had brought it, by the confession of the French themselves, to the verge of destruction.† Instead of instantly following up the Emperor's instructions,¹ by concentrating his forces

¹ Pel. i. 225,
230. Sm.
66, 70. Jom.
i. 159.

* "By the 1st April," said Napoleon. "the corps of Marshal Davoust, which broke up from the Oder and Lower Elbe on the 17th March, will be established between Nuremberg, Bamberg, and Bayreuth; Massena will be round Ulm, Oudinot between Augsburg and Donauwerth. From the 1st to the 15th, three French corps, 130,000 strong, besides 10,000 allies, the Bavarians in advance on the Isar, and the Wirtemburghers in reserve, may be concentrated at Ratisbon or Ingolstadt. Strong *têtes-à-pont* should be thrown up at Augsburg, to secure the passage of the Lech at Ingolstadt, in order to be able to debouch to the left bank of the Danube; and above all at Passau, which should be put in a condition to hold out two or three months. The Emperor's object is to concentrate his army as soon as possible at Ratisbon: the position on the Lech is to be assumed only if it is attacked before the concentration at the former town is possible. The second corps will be at Ratisbon by the 10th, and on that day Bessières will also arrive with the reserve cavalry of the Guard; Davoust will be at Nuremberg, Massena at Augsburg, Lefebvre at one or two marches from Ratisbon. Headquarters may then be safely established in that town, in the midst of 200,000 men, guarding the right bank of the Danube, from Ratisbon to Passau, by means of which stream provisions and supplies of every sort will be procured in abundance. Should the Austrians debouch from Bohemia or Ratisbon, Davoust and Lefebvre should fall back on Ingolstadt or Donauwerth."—*NAPOLEON'S INSTRUCTIONS TO BERTHIER, April 1, 1809; P. LÉLÉ, i. 212, 213.*

† "The Emperor, on his road to the army," says Jomini, "felt the liveliest disquietude at the posture of affairs—Berthier had brought the army within a hair's-breadth of destruction."—*JOMINI, iii. 159.*

at Ratisbon or Donauwerth, he scattered them, in spite of the remonstrances of Davoust and Massena, in the dangerous view of stopping the advance of the Austrians at all points. Nothing but the tardiness of their march saved the French army from the most serious calamities.

But while Berthier dispersed his troops as if to render them the more accessible to the blows of the Imperialists, the Archduke moved forward with such slowness as if he desired to give them time to concentrate their forces before he commenced his attack. They crossed the Inn on the 10th at Brannau and other points, and on the 16th they had only advanced as far as the Iser, a distance of twenty leagues. On the latter day they attacked the bridge of Landshut, over that river; and at the same time crossed over a division at Dingelfingen, farther down its course, which threatened to cut off the communications of General Dero, who commanded the Bavarians placed in garrison at that point, and obliged them to evacuate that important town. The whole line of the Iser was now abandoned by the Bavarians, who fell back in haste towards Ratisbon and Donauwerth; while the Austrians, in great strength, crossed that river at all points, and directed their steps on the great road to Nuremburg, evidently toward the bridges of Ratisbon, Neustadt, and Kellheim, in order to make themselves masters of both banks of the Danube. Yet even then, when their forces were concentrated, and greatly superior to those of the enemy as yet assembled, and every thing depended on rapidity of movement, they advanced only two or three leagues a-day: so inveterate were the habits of tardiness and delay which characterise the German character.¹

The approach of the formidable masses of the Austrians, however, fully a hundred and twenty thousand strong, even though advancing with the pace of a tortoise, threw Berthier into an agony of indecision. It then evidently appeared, how much the major-general of the army was indebted for the reputation he enjoyed to the directions of the Emperor; and how different a capacious talent for the management of details is, from the eagle glance which can direct the movements of the whole. Despite all his remonstrances, he compelled Davoust to concentrate his corps at Ratisbon, while at the very same

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

25.
Imprudent
dispersion of
his forces by
Berthier, and
slow advance
of the Aus-
trians.
April 16.

¹ *Jom. ii.*
159, 160.
Pel. i. 225,
239. *Stat.*
64, 72.

26.
Faulty move-
ments of
Berthier to
arrest their
progress.

April 16.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

moment, he ordered Massena to defend the line of the Lech—separating thus the two principal corps of the French army by at least thirty-five leagues from each other, and exposing the former, with his magnificent corps, the flower of the army, to be overwhelmed by the Archduke before any adequate reinforcements could be brought up to his support. Orders were at the same time given to Lefebvre, Wrede, and Oudinot, placing them in three lines, one behind another, across Bavaria, in so useless and absurd a position, that more than one of the marshals did not scruple to ascribe it to treachery—a charge, however, from which the whole character of Berthier, and the uninterrupted confidence he enjoyed from the Emperor, is sufficient to exculpate him. As it was, the scattered position which he gave to the army over a line of forty leagues in extent, with numerous undefended apertures between the corps, was such, that a little more activity on the part of the Archduke would have exposed it to certain destruction, and brought the Austrian columns in triumph to the Rhine.^{1*}

¹ Pelet, l. 240, 240. Thib. vii. 221, 224. Jom. ii. 159, 160. Sav. iv. 44, 54.

27.
The advance of the Austrians almost cuts in two the French army. April 17.

Meanwhile the Archduke, notwithstanding the tardiness of his movements, was inundating Bavaria with his troops. Hiller had advanced to Mosburg; Jellachich had occupied Munich, from whence the King of Bavaria hastily fled to Stuttgart to meet Napoleon; the two corps left in Bohemia had crossed the frontier, and were approaching by leisurely marches towards Ratisbon; while the Archduke himself, with four corps, a hundred thousand strong, was drawing near to Abensberg, Neustadt, and Kellheim, midway between Ratisbon and Donauwerth. Berthier had gone to the former town, where Davoust was stationed with sixty thousand men; but it seemed next to impossible to extricate him from his perilous situation, as Massena was at Augsburg, thirty-five leagues to the south-west, and the centre of the Archduke was interposed, in appalling strength, right

* “You cannot imagine,” said Napoleon, “in what a condition I found the army on my arrival, and to what dreadful reverses it was exposed, if we had had to deal with an enterprising enemy. I shall take care that I am not surprised again in such a manner.” And to Berthier himself he wrote from Donauwerth, the moment he arrived on the 7th.—“What you have done appears so strange, that if I was not aware of your friendship I should think you were betraying me; Davoust is at this moment more completely at the disposal of the Archduke than of myself.”—PELET, v. 218; THIBAUDEAU, vii. 224; SAVARY, iv. 44.

between them. The Bavarians under Wrede, the corps of Lefebvre, and the reserve under Oudinot, were indeed in front of the Archduke around Ingolstadt; but they could with difficulty maintain their own ground, and were in no condition to extricate Davoust, who, threatened by a hundred thousand Austrians under the Archduke on the south of the Danube, and forty thousand descending from Bohemia on the north, seemed destined for no other fate than that of Mack four years before at Ulm.¹

Matters were in this critical state when Napoleon, early on the morning of the 17th, arrived at Donauwerth. Instantly he began inquiring of every one concerning the position, destination, and movements of the Austrian corps; sent out officers in all directions to acquire accurate information; and next morning despatched the most pressing orders to Massena to hasten, at least with his advanced guards and cavalry, to Pfaffenhofen, a considerable town, nearly halfway from Augsburg to the seat of war round Neustadt and Kellheim.* Davoust, at the same time, received orders to move on the 18th in the direction of Neustadt, so as to form a junction with the Bavarians and Wirtemburghers and Lefebvre, who had retired to that quarter before the Archduke Charles; so that in the next twenty-four hours these two marshals would be twenty leagues nearer each other, and, having the troops of the Confederation in the interval between them, might almost be said to be in communication.² At the same time, dissembling his fears, the Emperor addressed to his soldiers a nervous proclamation, in which,

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Pelet, i.
262, 263.
Thib. vii.
225, 226.
Jom. ii. 160.
Stut. 72, 80.
Sav. iv. 44,
45.

28.

Napoleon
instantly
reassembles
his army.

² Sav. iv. 50,
51. Pelet, i.
263, 267.
Thib. vii. 226,
227.

* "It is indispensable that Oudinot with his corps, and your three other divisions, with your cuirassiers and cavalry, should sleep at Pfaffenhofen to-morrow night; those in the rear, who are still at Landsberg, should do their utmost to reach Ascha, or at least get on as far as they can on the road from Augsburg to Ascha. One word will explain to you the urgency of affairs. Prince Charles, with 80,000 men, debouched yesterday from Landshut on Ratisbon; the Bavarians contended the whole day with his advanced guard. Orders have been despatched to Davoust to move with 60,000 men in the direction of Neustadt, where he will form a junction with the Bavarians. To-morrow (19th) all your troops who can be mustered at Pfaffenhofen, with the Wirtemburghers, a division of cuirassiers, and every man you can collect, should be in a condition to fall on the rear of Prince Charles. A single glance must show you that never was more pressing occasion for diligence and activity than at present. With 60,000 good troops, Davoust may indeed make head against the Archduke; but I consider him ruined without resource, if Oudinot and your three divisions are not on his rear before daybreak on the 19th, and I look to you to inspire the soldiers with all they should feel on so momentous an occasion. In the 18th, 19th, and 20th, the whole affairs of Germany will be decided."—*NAPOLÉON to MASSENA, Donauwerth, 18th April, 1809; SAVARY, iv. 51, 52.*

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

29.
Movements
of the two
armies to-
wards each
other.

April 18.

April 19.

¹ Stat. 76, 81.
Sav. iv. 50.
Thib. vii. 226,
228. Pel. i.
281, 293.

loudly reproaching the Austrians with the commencement of hostilities, he promised to lead them to yet more glorious fields of fame.*

Notwithstanding the pressing instance of the Emperor, and their own sense of the urgency of the case, Davoust and Massena could not reach the places assigned to them so early as he had anticipated, and the former, in consequence, was exposed to the most imminent danger. The messenger ordering Davoust to draw towards the Lech had been despatched from Donauwerth at two o'clock in the morning of the 17th, and his instructions were to march forthwith on Ingolstadt; while Wrede with his Bavarians was stopped in his retreat at Neustadt, and ordered to concentrate with the Wirttemburghers, behind the Abens. Davoust received his orders at midnight of the 17th, but his divisions were dispersed in the villages around Ratisbon, as well as in that town, and could not be instantly put in motion; while the bulk of Massena's forces, being six or eight leagues behind Augsburg, could not be concentrated till the night of the 18th, even at that town, or reach Pfaffenhofen till late on the following evening. Davoust, having collected his whole force during the 18th, commenced the evacuation of that town at daybreak on the following morning; and by mid-day on the 19th, was already approaching Neustadt; leaving only a single regiment, three thousand strong, to guard the important bridge of Ratisbon. On the same day the Archduke divided the army which he commanded in person into two parts; and while he left the Archduke Louis with fifteen thousand men to watch the troops of the Confederation on the Abens, he himself, with seventy-five thousand, moved towards Ratisbon, in hopes of making himself master of that important passage over the Danube during the absence of Davoust's corps.¹ By this means he would at once gain possession of both banks of that river,

* "Soldiers! the territory of the Confederation of the Rhine has been violated. The Austrian general supposes that we are to fly at the sight of his eagles, and abandon our allies to his mercy. I arrive with the rapidity of lightning in the midst of you. Soldiers! I was surrounded by your bayonets when the Emperor of Austria arrived at my bivouac in Moravia; you heard him implore my clemency, and swear an eternal friendship. Conquerors in three wars, Austria has owed every thing to our generosity; three times she has perjured herself! Our former successes are a sure guarantee for our future triumphs. Let us march, then, and at our aspect let the enemy recognise his conquerors."—*Moniteur*, 26th April 1809; and THIBAUDEAU, vii. 224.

and open up a secure communication with his two corps under Klenau, on its opposite bank. The worst was to be apprehended for Davoust, if, in the course of his march to Neustadt, he had encountered this formidable mass, moving in a direction almost perpendicular to his flank, and not more than a few leagues distant. The two armies crossed without the bulk of the forces meeting.

Napoleon's plan was now clearly formed: it was to concentrate his whole army as rapidly as possible on the Abens, in advance of Pfaffenhofen; and drawing back his left, to throw his right, under Massena, forward, so as to drive back the Archduke Louis; separate altogether the Grand Army under the Archduke Charles from Jellachich and Hiller, who were nearer the Alps, and force it up into the narrow space formed by the bend of the Danube at Ratisbon. He then hoped either to compel it to surrender, from the impossibility of finding an egress, if that town was still held by the French troops, or at least induce the sacrifice of its artillery and baggage in the confusion of defiling in front of a victorious army over the narrow bridge which that town commanded. But the execution of this plan was exceedingly hazardous, and in presence of an enterprising enemy might have led to fatal results. Abensberg was the vital point: whoever reached it first in sufficient strength, gained the means of preventing the concentration of his adversary. Davoust, to reach his destination, required to traverse the defiles of Abach and Portsaa, within two leagues of Abensberg, and this defile was much nearer the camp of the Archduke Charles on the 18th at Rohr, than the point from which Davoust set out from Ratisbon. Eighty thousand Austrians might with ease have occupied the important posts of Abensberg and Portsaa, which would have effectually barred the way to Davoust's corps, and thrown him back upon Ratisbon, and the *cul-de-sac* formed by the bend of the Danube, over which there was no other bridge—the very fate which Napoleon designed for the army of Prince Charles. When, therefore, instead of pushing on with an overwhelming force to this vital point, the Archduke Charles, when within a day's march of it, divided his army on the 18th, and bent his course, with the bulk of his forces, towards Ratisbon, now almost destitute of defenders,¹

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

30.
Napoleon's
plan of oper-
ations. Its
great dangers.

¹ Jom. iii.
164, 165.
Thib. vii. 227.
Pel. i. 286,
295.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

31.

Actions be-
tween
Davoust and
Hohenzollern
at Thaun.
April 19.

Napoleon had some reason to say that his star had not yet deserted him.*

The covering troops of Davoust, however, encountered and had a rude shock with those of the Archduke, near the village of Thaun. St Hilaire and Friant had arrived on the heights of Salhaupt and Tengen, where they were stationed in order to protect the French left, and cover the march of the remainder of the corps, with its artillery and trains, through the important defile of Portsaa, when the light cavalry of Hohenzollern appeared in sight, whose province in like manner was to cover the left of the Austrian army, and secure their march to Ratisbon. Fresh troops were successively brought up by either party as the day advanced, and before the evening twenty thousand men were engaged on both sides. The combat soon became extremely warm; some woods on the field were successively taken and retaken, and the greatest valour was mutually displayed. At length a violent thunder-storm, which came on at six o'clock, separated the combatants, after each had sustained a loss of three thousand men, without either being able to boast of a decisive advantage. But although both retained their positions, yet as the French, under cover of their resistance at this point, succeeded in passing unmolested through the important defile, and before nightfall reached the vital point of Abensberg, they with reason claimed the victory.¹

Reassured by the junction effected by Davoust with the Bavarians under Lefebvre, at this point, as to the security of his centre, Napoleon resolved to commence a vigorous offensive, and by advancing his right against Landshut,

* Napoleon's plans at this critical juncture are clearly developed in the letter which he wrote to Massena at twelve o'clock noon on the 19th. "Prince Charles, with his whole army, was this morning a day's march from Ratisbon, having his base and communications on Landshut. Davoust has evacuated Ratisbon to move upon Neustadt, and join the Bavarians: I look, therefore, for an affair every minute; nevertheless, it is now noon, and I have not heard the cannon. You will perceive at a glance that I am keeping back my left to throw forward my right, which you form, and which to-day should enter into action. Push Oudinot forward to Neustadt. From thence I shall probably direct the 4th corps to Landshut; and then Prince Charles, attacked on his left, will find he has lost his line of operations upon the Isar. Every thing will be cleared up to-day; the moments are precious; hours must be counted. Twelve or fifteen thousand of such rabble as you have defeated this morning, should be easily disposed of by six thousand of our people."—*NAPOLÉON to MASSENA, 19th April, 1809; PELLET, l. 285, 286.*

¹ Pel. i. 294,
300. Stut. 84,
89. Jom. iii.
165.

both threaten the Archduke's communications, and throw him back into the net prepared for him by the bend of the Danube at Ratisbon. Early on the morning of the 19th, when this bloody combat was going on upon the banks of the Danube at Thaur, Massena had encountered a body of five thousand infantry and cavalry at Pfaffenhofen, and defeated it in a few minutes, with the loss of several hundred killed and wounded. In the course of the day, he had concentrated all his corps at that place: Oudinot was still further in advance towards Freysing, with his light troops stretching along the Isar, so as to intercept all communication between the Archduke and his left wing at Munich: the corps of Davoust was grouped in the villages around Abensberg; while Lefebvre, Wrede, and Vandamme, with the troops of the Confederation, were at Neustadt and Biburg. Thus the whole French army, at length concentrated in a line of ten leagues broad, was in a condition to take part in any general battle or in common operations on the following day. The Austrian troops were assembled in the narrow space formed by the Isar as a base, and the bend of the Danube at Ratisbon as a curve; Lichtenstein was at Eglossheim, Hohenzollern at Haussem, Rosenberg at Dinzing, and the remainder in the villages from Mainburg on the south to the neighbourhood of Ratisbon on the north; but their principal masses were grouped around ECHMÜHL. They were less prepared than the French, however, for a decisive affair on the morrow, being spread over a surface at least sixteen leagues in extent; and what was still worse, the great mass under the Archduke was separated, by an unoccupied space four leagues in breadth, from the corps of General Hiller at Mosburg; and two powerful corps under Klenau were uselessly lost on the northern bank of the Danube, where there was not an enemy to oppose them.¹

Being well aware, from the position of the respective armies, that a decisive affair was at hand, Napoleon adopted the generous, and at the same time prudent policy, of combating in person at the head of the troops of the Confederation, leaving the native French to their inherent valour, their experienced skill, and the direction* of their veteran marshals. He repaired to the head-

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

32.

Positions of
the two
armies on the
night of the
19th.

¹ Jom. iii.
164, 165.
Pel. i. 305,
306. Stut.
90, 92.

33.

Napoleon's
address to the
German con-
federates.

April 20.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

visited at daybreak the bivouacs of the troops, which he traversed from right to left along their whole extent, accompanied only by the officers and generals of the Bavarians. He was received with the loudest acclamations, and a transport rivalling that of his own veteran soldiers; so contagious is the feeling of military ardour, and so winning was the confidence with which the mighty conqueror threw himself on the support of his new allies. Clapping the Prince Royal of Bavaria on the shoulder, he exclaimed, when the inspection was finished—"Well, Prince Royal, this is the way in which one must be King of Bavaria; when your turn comes, all the world will follow you if you do the same; but if you remain at home, every one will go to sleep; adieu empire and glory." To the Wirtemburghers, at the same time, he spoke of the glories they had acquired while combating the Austrians in the wars of the Great Frederick; and of the laurels which they had won in the last campaign in Silesia. These words, translated into German by their respective officers, excited great enthusiasm, which was soon raised to the very highest pitch by the proclamation to the troops, in which the Emperor declared that, without any French to aid them, he was to combat that day at their head, and announced a glorious destiny to their countries.* Perceiving that the spirit of the troops was now roused to the highest point, the Emperor gave the signal to engage.¹

¹ Sav. iv. 49.
Thib. vii.
229, 231.
Pel. ii. 8, 10.

Notwithstanding, however, the deserved confidence which he placed in the German troops, Napoleon did not trust the result of the day exclusively to their exertions. Lannes, who the day before had joined the army from Saragossa, was intrusted with the command of two French divisions, drawn from Massena's corps, which formed the

34.
Their dangerous situation.
April 20.

* "Bavarians! I do not come among you as the Emperor of the French, but as chief of the Confederation of the Rhine and protector of your country. You combat to-day alone against the Germans; not a single Frenchman is to be seen in the first line; they are only in reserve, and the enemy are not aware of their presence. I place entire confidence in your valour. I have extended the limits of your country; but I now see that I have not done enough. Hereafter, I will render you so great, that, to sustain a war against Austria, you will no longer have need of my assistance. Two hundred years the Bavarian banners, protected by France, resisted Austria; now we are on the march for Vienna; where we shall punish her for the mischief which she has always done to your forefathers. Austria intended to have partitioned your country into baronies, and divided you among her regiments. Bavarians, this war is the last which you will have to sustain against your enemies: attack them with the bayonet, and annihilate them."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 230, 231.

left of the centre, under Napoleon's immediate command, and was to advance on the great road from Kellheim to Landshut; the Wirtemburghers, under Vandamme, were in the centre; the Bavarians on the right, directly opposite to ABENSBERG, under Wrede. Had two of the Austrian corps been concentrated, they might successively have combated this aggregate of allied troops, whose total strength did not exceed sixty-five thousand men; but, unfortunately, they were so much dispersed as to be incapable of opposing any effective resistance to the enemy. Hiller, with twenty-two thousand, was in march from Mainburg to Pfaffenhausen; the Archduke Louis, with ten thousand, guarded Siegenburg, with its bridge over the Aber; the Prince of Reuss, with fifteen thousand, lay in the rear of Kirchdorf; General Thierry, with five thousand, at Offensteller. Thus, above fifty thousand were in front of the French; but scattered over a space several leagues broad, and without any centre or plan of operations.¹

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Stat. 92,
96. Jom. ii.
168, 169.
Pel. ii. 12,
18.

Not expecting an attack on that day, they were leisurely performing the various movements assigned to them, with a view to the concentration of their troops for the morrow, when they were simultaneously attacked by the enemy at all points, who passed at once from cautious defensive to furious offensive operations. They made, in consequence, but a feeble resistance; or rather, they were attacked at so many different points, and so much in detail, that no one general could take upon himself the responsibility of halting to give battle. The day was a sort of running fight, in many detached places, rather than a regular engagement. It proved, however, very disastrous to the Austrians. Thierry, whose troops had not recovered the rout of the preceding day, assailed by Lannes with greatly superior forces, was thrown back in confusion upon Hiller's troops at Rottenburg, who, coming up in haste from Mainburg, instead of arresting, increased the general disorder, and the whole were driven across the bridge of the Laber, which Lannes traversed with bayonets fixed and colours flying. The Prince of Reuss and Bianchi, attacked in front by Lefebvre, and in flank by Vandamme with the Wirtemburghers, deemed themselves fortunate in being able to escape to Pfaffen-

35.
Combats of
Abensberg.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Stat. 92,
99. Pel. ii.
12, 23. Thib.
vii. 232. Jom.
ii. 168, 169.

36.
Hiller pur-
sued to
Landshut by
Napoleon.
April 21.

hausen without any serious loss; whither they were immediately followed by the Archduke Louis, who had been driven from the bridge of Siegenburg, closely pursued by Wrede and the Bavarians, who, on this occasion, emulated the vigour and rapidity of the French troops. The Austrians were not routed at any point, and no artillery was taken; nevertheless, they had to lament the loss of eight thousand men; the line to Landshut was thrown open to the enemy; they had been deprived of the advantage of the initiative; and, what is of incalculable importance, had been unsuccessful in the first considerable action of the campaign.¹

Napoleon was not slow in following up the important blow thus struck in the outset of operations. His great object was to throw himself upon the Archduke's communications; and the success thus gained against the covering corps of Prince Louis, by opening up the great road to Landshut, rendered that undertaking an easy task. To cover the movement, and distract his attention, Davoust received orders to threaten the enemy on the side of Ratisbon, where the bulk of his forces was assembled; but the serious operations were conducted by the Emperor in person, against the retiring columns of Hiller, Bianchi, and the Archduke Louis. Uniting their shattered troops, these generals had fallen back in the direction of Landshut, in the hopes of preserving that important passage in the rear, with the immense stores of baggage and ammunition which it contained, from the attacks of the enemy. Thither, however, they were instantly followed by Napoleon, who, putting himself on horseback at daybreak on the 21st, moved every disposable bayonet and sabre in the direction of Landshut; while Massena, on his right, still further in advance, manœuvred in such a way, between Pfaffenhofen and Mosburg, as to render a retreat upon that town a matter of absolute necessity, to prevent the communications of the Grand Army being instantly cut off. At the same time, Davoust, on the left, was to engage the attention of the Archduke Charles so completely as to prevent him from rendering any effectual assistance.²

These movements, admirably combined, and executed with uncommon vigour and precision, proved completely

² Stat. 100.
104. Pel. ii.
3, 5, 37.

successful. The rearguard of the Archduke Louis, warmly attacked on different occasions during the night, was thrown back in disorder in the morning on Furth and Arth, by roads already choked with baggage waggons and all the immense *materiel* of the grand Austrian army. Their confusion became altogether inextricable when they approached the valley of the Iser, and the bridges of Landshut, which are traversed only by two chaussées, passing for a considerable distance on the western side through low swamps, altogether impassable for artillery or chariots. To strengthen the rearguard while the retiring columns were defiling through those perilous straits, Hiller ordered General Vincent to hold firm with the cavalry at their entrance. But at that very moment Napoleon, accompanied by a powerful train of artillery, and the cuirassiers of Nansouty, arrived on the ground; and instantly, under cover of a tremendous fire of cannon, the French horse advanced to the charge. Vincent's dragoons were unable to withstand the shock; horse, foot, and cannon, were thrown together in wild disorder on the chaussées, and a vast quantity of artillery and baggage abandoned by the Austrians, who crowded in utter disorder into Landshut. But even behind its ramparts they were no longer in safety; for on the same morning Massena had gained possession of the bridge of Mosburg, and was rapidly advancing, agreeably to his orders, down the right, or eastern bank of the Iser. Alarmed by his approach, the Austrians put the torch to the long wooden bridge which leads into the town, and kept up a heavy fire upon it from the neighbouring houses and churches. General Moulon, however, at the head of the French grenadiers, advanced through a shower of balls, amidst the flames, to the porteculis, which was speedily demolished, and the heroic assailants burst into the town. Hiller now only fought to gain time to draw off his artillery and chariots; but such was the rapidity of Massena's advance, whose dense columns now covered the opposite side of the river, and had reached to within a mile of the town, that a large part of them required to be sacrificed.¹ The Austrian general at length, after having made a most gallant resistance, drew off towards the Inn in the

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

37.
His defeat
by the
Emperor.

¹ Stat. 101,
109. Pel. ii.
35, 49. Jom.
iii. 170, 171.
Thib. vii. 232,
233.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

direction of Oetting, where he crossed on the following day, having lost nearly six thousand men, twenty-five pieces of cannon, six hundred ammunition waggons, a pontoon train, and an enormous quantity of baggage, in this disastrous affair.*

38.
Operations of
Davoust and
the Archduke
Charles in
the centre.

The task assigned to Davoust, while Napoleon was in this manner destroying the left wing of the Imperialists, and laying bare their vital line of communications to Landshut and the Inn, was to occupy the attention of the Archduke Charles, who with the whole centre of the army had diverged to Ratisbon, in order to make himself master of the important bridge at that place, and open up the communications with the two corps of Klenau and Bellegarde on the opposite side of the Danube. Rightly judging that the best way to impose upon his adversary, and inspire him with a mistaken idea of his own strength, was to assume the offensive, the French marshal, early on the morning of the 21st, commenced an attack in the woody country which lies on the banks of the Laber, and after a warm contest drove the Austrians across that river. Though their positions were strong and their forces numerous, yet Hohenzollern was so much deceived by the vivacity of the French attack, and by the idea that two divisions of their army would never have ventured, unsupported, to hazard an assault upon the dense masses of his own and Rosenberg's corps, that he never doubted that it was only a part of a general movement to pierce the Imperial centre, and that he would soon have Napoleon thundering on his flank. He gave orders for his troops, accordingly, at noon, to fall back and take up a new position facing the south, on the right or eastern bank of the Laber, between that river and Dinzing. Forty thousand Austrian foot and five thousand horse were in two hours collected there, where they were soon assailed by thirty-five thousand French and Bavarians, under

* A singular trait of heroism occurred on this occasion, on the part of an Austrian grenadier, which is recorded with generous eulogy by the French historian Pelet. Two companies of Austrian grenadiers of Teuchmeister were closely pursued by the French cavalry, and on the point of being surrounded. A grenadier ran to an ammunition waggon and set it on fire; he was instantly blown up with it, but, by his death, and the admiration which it inspired in the pursuers, arrested the pursuit, and saved his comrades.—STUTTERHEIM, 108; PELET, ii. 48.

Davoust, Lefebvre, and Montbrun, whom the Emperor, after the victory of Abensberg, had detached to assist in that quarter, while he himself followed up his decisive successes against Hiller at Landshut. The action was warmly contested till nightfall, when both parties maintained their positions; and though each had to lament the loss of three thousand men killed and wounded, both claimed the victory. But, as the operations of Davoust were intended rather as a feint than a serious attack, and they had completely the desired effect of preventing any reinforcements being sent from the centre to the left wing under Hiller, then in the act of being crushed by the overwhelming legions of the Emperor, the French with reason claimed the advantage.¹

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Stat. 109,
115. Pel. ii.
49, 57. Jom.
ii. 172, 173.
Thib. vii. 233,
Davoust's
Report.
Pelet, ii. 416.

While these important events were shaking the Austrian left wing and centre, the Archduke Charles with the main strength of the army was pressing the attack on Ratisbon. That town, commanding the only stone bridge over the Danube below Ulm, and opening up a direct communication with the two Austrian corps on its northern bank, was at all times a point of consequence. But it had now become, unknown to the Austrians, of incalculable importance, as forming the only line of retreat for the army, now that its communication with the Inn was cut off by the capture of Landshut, and the alarming progress of the Emperor on the left. Fully sensible of the value of such an acquisition, the Archduke, as soon as Davoust had left the town, ordered Kollowrath to attack it on the northern, and Lichtenstein on the southern side. The former quickly obeyed his orders, and appeared on the 19th in great strength in the villages at the northern extremity of the bridge, which were carried by assault. Soon after a dense column burst open the gates, and advanced by the great street to the northern end of the bridge; but, being there stopped by the palisades, and severely galled by a cross-fire from the houses, it was obliged to retire after sustaining a severe loss. In the afternoon, however, Lichtenstein, with the advanced guard of the grand Austrian army, approached from the southern side, and attempts were made by the French garrison to destroy the bridge. But that solid structure, the work of the Romans, composed of large

39.
Attack and
capture of
Ratisbon by
the Aus-
trians.

April 20.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

blocks of stone strongly cemented by Pozzuolo cement, was still, after having stood for seventeen hundred years, so firm, that it resisted all attempts at demolition by ordinary implements; and the powder of the garrison was so much exhausted, that they had not the means of blowing it up. Deeming resistance impracticable, and having nearly expended his ammunition, the French colonel surrendered at discretion. Thus were the successes in the shock of these two redoubtable antagonists in some degree balanced; for, if the French had gained possession of Landshut, and the communications of the grand Austrian army with Vienna, they had lost Ratisbon, the key to both banks of the Danube; and, if they had five thousand prisoners to exhibit, taken in the combats of Abensberg and Landshut, the Austrians could point with exultation to the unusual spectacle of an entire regiment, nearly three thousand strong, with its eagle and standards, which had fallen into their hands.¹

¹ Stat. 114,
120. Pel. ii.
24, 32. Jom.
ii. 169. Thib.
vii. 232.

40.
Preparatory
movements
on both sides.

Matters were now evidently approaching a crisis between the Archduke and Napoleon, and both these able generals concentrated their forces, to engage in it with advantage. Conceiving that the French Emperor was at a distance, following up his successes against Hiller, the Austrian general resumed the movement towards Neustadt, which he had so unhappily abandoned three days before, and having brought Kollowrath, with his whole corps, over to the southern bank of the Danube, concentrated eighty thousand men between Abensberg and Ratisbon; Bellegarde, with his corps, above twenty-five thousand strong, was so far removed, without any assignable reason, that he could not approach nearer on that day to the scene of action than Stad-am-Hoff, at the northern end of the bridge of Ratisbon. The eighty thousand men, however, whom he had assembled, would in all probability have been able to make head against all the forces which Napoleon could bring against them, were it not that, instead of grouping them together in one field, the Archduke moved Kollowrath and Lichtenstein, forty thousand strong, on the great road to Neustadt, by the defile of Abach, which Davoust had previously traversed, throwing thus the weight of his forces against

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

the French left, and intending to menace their rear and communications, in the same way as they had done with the Austrian left, by the capture of Landshut. But Napoleon was in too great strength to be disquieted by such a demonstration, and leaving only a curtain of light troops to retard the advance of the Austrians in that direction, he concentrated all his forces to bear down upon their centre at ECHMUHL and Laichling, the scene of such obstinate fighting on the preceding day. At day-break on the 22d the Emperor set out from Landshut, taking with him the whole of Lannes' and the greater part of Massena's corps, the Wirtemburghers, the reserve under Oudinot, which, coming up from the rear, received in the night that direction, and the Guards and cuirassiers just arrived from Spain. Thus one-half of the Archduke's army, under Rosenberg and Hohenzollern, not forty thousand strong, was to be exposed to the blows of above seventy-five thousand French, flushed with victory, and led on by the Emperor in person.¹

¹ Stut. 115,
125. Pel. ii.
59, 75. Jom
ii. 173, 174.
Sav. iv. 53.

The Austrians, waiting for the arrival of Kollowrath's corps from the north of the Danube, were not in a condition to prosecute their offensive movement to the French left, till after mid-day. They had arrived at the defile of Abach, however, and were driving the light troops of Davoust before them, when a loud cannonade on the extreme left announced the arrival of the Emperor on that weakly guarded part of the line. As they arrived on the top of the hills of Lintach, which separate the valley of the Iser from that of the Laber, the French who came up from Landshut, beheld the field of battle stretched out like a map before them. From the marshy meadows which bordered the shores of the Laber rose a succession of hills, one above another, in the form of an amphitheatre, with their slopes cultivated and diversified by hamlets, and beautiful forests clothing the higher ground. The villages of Echmuhl and Laichling, separated by a large copsewood, appeared in view, with the great road to Ratisbon winding up the acclivities behind them. The meadows were green with the first colours of spring; the osiers and willows which fringed the streams that intersected them were just bursting into leaf; and the trees which bordered the roadside already cast an

41.
Description
of the field
of battle.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

agreeable shade upon the dusty and beaten highway which lay beneath their boughs. The French soldiers involuntarily paused as they arrived at the summit, to gaze on this varied and interesting scene; but soon other emotions than those of admiration of nature swelled the breasts of the warlike multitude who thronged to the spot. In the intervals of these woods artillery was to be seen; amidst those villages standards were visible; and long white lines, with the glancing of helmets and bayonets on the higher ground, showed the columns of Rosenberg and Hohenzollern already in battle array, in very advantageous positions, on the opposite side of the valley. Joyfully the French troops descended into the low grounds; while the Emperor galloped to the front, and, hastily surveying the splendid but intricate scene, immediately formed his plan of attack.¹

¹ Pel. ii. 76,
77. Personal
Observation.

42.
Battle of
Echmuhl.
April 22.

The plan of Napoleon was to cut the Austrians off from their whole remaining communications with the Iser and Inn, and by throwing them back upon Ratisbon and Bohemia, as their only line of retreat, sever them entirely from the support and protection of Vienna. With this view he began the action, advancing his right in great strength under Lannes, who commanded the divisions Gudin and St Hilaire, belonging to Davoust's corps, who soon commenced a furious attack upon the Austrian left, which his great superiority of force enabled him to turn and drive back. At the same time, the Wirtemburghers were brought up to the attack of Echmuhl in the centre; but the tremendous fire of the Austrian batteries at that point so shattered their ranks, that, though repeatedly brought again to the charge by their French officers, they were always repulsed, and sustained a very heavy loss. Finding that the village could not be carried by an attack in front, Lannes detached the division Gudin, which assailed in flank the batteries that protected it: this rendered it necessary to draw back the guns, or point them in another direction; and, aided by this diversion, the Wirtemburghers at length dislodged their antagonists from this important post. At the same time Davoust resumed the offensive on the side of Abach, and, by a vigorous effort, made himself master of Unter Laichling

and the woods which adjoin it, so as to prevent the enemy from drawing any support from that quarter to the left, which was principally menaced. The corps of Rosenberg, placed on the high grounds between Echmuhl and Laichling, was now hard pressed, being assailed by the Wirtemburghers under Vandamme, who issued from the former village on the one side, and the victorious troops of Davoust, who debouched with loud shouts from the latter on the other. But these brave men, fronting both ways, presented an invincible resistance to the enemy; the repeated charges of the Bavarian horse against their guns, were baffled by the valour of the Austrian cuirassiers; and the battle wore a doubtful aspect in that quarter, when intelligence arrived that Lannes had made himself master of a battery of sixteen guns on the left, after sabring the cannoniers, who gloriously fell beside their pieces.¹

Rightly supposing that the Archduke would suspend his attack on the right, in consequence of this check on the left, against which the constantly increasing masses of the enemy were now concentrating, and that a general retreat would take place, Napoleon conceived that the decisive moment had arrived, and therefore brought up the reserve cavalry, which hitherto had not taken a part in the action, and sent it forward, at a rapid pace, along the high-road to Ratisbon, to harass their retreat. At the same time a general advance took place along the whole line; Lannes on the right, Lefebvre and Vandamme in the centre, Davoust on the left, Massena and Oudinot, with the Guards, in reserve. Orders to fall back were now given by the Archduke, or rather a change of front took place, the left retiring rapidly, and the whole wheeling back to a certain degree on the point of the right, which held firm at Abach, so as to present a new front oblique to the former, but still barring the great road to Ratisbon to the enemy. His troops were disposed in échelon, from Santing to Isling, in a sort of column parallel to the highway, at the distance of a mile and a half from it; while on that chaussée he left only the grenadiers, who were still untouched, and in the rear of all the undaunted cuirassiers. These dispositions, though based on the abandonment of the field of battle

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Stat. 139.
145. Pel. ii.
79, 85. Jom.
ii. 174. Thib.
vii. 234.

43.
Napoleon
gains the
victory.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Stat. 146,
148. Pel. ii.
85, 92. Jom.
iii. 174.

44.
Desperate
cavalry action
in front
of Ratisbon.

² Stat. 144,
148. Pel. ii.
85, 94. Jom.
iii. 174. Sav.
iv. 54.

and the victory to his antagonists, were admirably calculated to preserve the troops from disaster in the hazardous operation of retiring before a victorious enemy—the great object to which the attention of the Archduke was always directed. The movements on the part of the Imperialists were at first performed with firmness and regularity; but by degrees their infantry fell into confusion, in consequence of the frequent woods which interrupted their line of march, and the close pursuit of the enemy, which prevented the ranks, once broken, from being ever thoroughly regained.¹

The consequences might have been disastrous in the level and open plains, which ensued when the retiring columns approached the Danube, had not the Archduke placed twelve squadrons of the Emperor's cuirassiers and a large body of hussars in front of Eglofsheim, which was garrisoned by six battalions of grenadiers, and supported by several powerful batteries. As the pursuing columns approached this imposing mass of cavalry, they paused till the French horse came up in sufficient strength to hazard an engagement; a variety of charges of hussars then took place on both sides, with various success; but at length the magnificent Austrian cuirassiers bore down with apparently irresistible force upon their pursuers. The French light horse could not withstand the shock, and were quickly dispersed; but their cuirassiers came up, and then two rival bodies, equally heavily armed, equally brave, equally disciplined, engaged in mortal combat. So vehement was the onset, so nearly matched the strength of the combatants, so tremendous the conflict, that both parties, as if by mutual consent, suspended their fire to await its issue; the roar of the musketry subsided, even the heavy booming of the artillery ceased, and from the mêlée was heard only, as from the battles of the knights of old, the loud clang of the swords ringing on the helmets and cuirasses of the dauntless antagonists.²*

* "Ἐφείζεν δὲ μάχη φθισίμβροτος ἐγγίησι
Μάκρῃς, ἃς εἶχον ταμισίχροας· ὅσας δ' αἰμερῶν
Αὐγὴ χαλκίῃ κεῖθ' ἀπὸ λαμπομενάων,
Θωρήκων τε ποσμήκτων, σακίων τε φαεινῶν,
Ἐχόμενων ἄμυδις· μαλα πρὶν θεασυπάρεδρος εἶη,
ὅς ποτε γηθήσειεν ἰδὼν πόνον, οὐδ' ἀπάχοιτο."

HOMER'S *Iliad*, xiii. 339, 344.

The sun set while the contest was still undecided ; the moon rose on the deadly strife, and amidst her silvery rays, fire was struck on all sides by the steel upon the armour, and dazzling sparks flew around the combatants, as if a thousand anvils were at once ringing under the blows of the forgers. Nothing could overcome the heroic courage of the Imperialists ; but their equipment was not equal to that of their opponents, and in close fight the Austrian horsemen, whose front only was covered, were not an adequate match for the cuirassiers of Napoleon, whose armour went entirely round their body. After a desperate struggle, their numbers were so reduced that they were unable any longer to make head against the enemy, and leaving two-thirds of their number on the field, they were driven in disorder along the chaussée towards Ratisbon. But their heroic stand, however fatal to themselves, proved the salvation of the army. During the engagement, the artillery and infantry withdrew in safety to the rear ; and Napoleon, who perceived that the Archduke had brought up the reserve under Lichtenstein, which had not yet been engaged, dreading a reverse like that which befell the Austrians in similar circumstances at Marengo, reluctantly, and against the earnest advice of Lannes, gave orders for the army to halt, and bivouac on the ground which they occupied.¹

The situation of the Archduke was now very critical—with a victorious army, headed by Napoleon, in his front, and the broad Danube, traversed only by the single bridge of Ratisbon, in his rear. By bringing up his whole forces from the opposite side of the river, and concentrating his troops from Abach and the right, he was still in a situation to compensate the losses of the day, and give battle with eighty thousand admirable troops in front of Ratisbon.* But that field was eminently hazardous, for a serious disaster sustained there might lead to total ruin ; and his army was not only extremely fatigued by the constant combats and marches of five successive days, but considerably affected in its spirit by the reverses it had experienced, and seriously

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

45.

In which the Austrian horse are at length overthrown.

¹ Stut. 146, 151. Pel. ii. 85, 94. Jom. iii. 174, 175. Sav. iv. 54, 55.

46.

The Archduke retreats across the Danube, and Ratisbon is taken by the French.

* He had sixty thousand men around the walls of Ratisbon the night after the battle : including Bellegarde's corps, which was still on the other side of the Danube, the total force was about eighty thousand.—STUTTGART, 150 ; and GRUENE'S *MS. Correspondence*.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

weakened by the loss of the reserve parks and ammunition train at Landshut. Five thousand men had been killed and wounded, and seven thousand made prisoners in the battle which had just terminated, besides twelve standards and sixteen pieces of cannon, taken by the enemy; though Lichtenstein's corps much more than supplied these losses, yet the French Guards under Oudinot had just arrived on the field from Spain, and Massena's corps, which had not been engaged at all, was certain to bear the brunt of the next battle which might ensue. Influenced by these considerations, the Archduke resolved to retire during the night, and restore the spirit and recruit the losses of his army in Bohemia, before again engaging in active operations. A bridge of boats was immediately thrown over the Danube, some miles above Ratisbon, and over it and the bridge at that town the army defiled without intermission the whole night. With such expedition and order was this critical operation conducted, that before nine o'clock on the following morning, not only were almost all the soldiers, but all the guns, chariots, and ammunition waggons, safely on the other side. When the French, who, from the large watch-fires kept up on the enemy's lines during the night, supposed a decisive battle was intended for the ensuing day, stood to their arms in the morning, they beheld with astonishment the whole plain of Ratisbon deserted, except by a few broken waggons or gun-carriages, and saw only in the extreme distance dense masses of cavalry protecting the retreat of the last trains within the walls of Ratisbon.¹*

¹ Stat. 160.
164. Pel. ii.
93, 99. Jom.
iii. 174, 175.
Thib. vii. 234,
235.

No sooner did Napoleon discover that the Archduke had withdrawn the bulk of his forces during the night, than he moved forward the whole cavalry to attack the rearguard, drawn up in front of Ratisbon. Notwithstanding all their efforts, they could not prevent great

* The French lost in the battle of Echmuhl about six thousand men. The bulletin stated the general loss from the opening of the campaign, at twelve hundred killed, and four thousand wounded; which, according to their usual proportion of admitting only a fourth part of its real amount, would make it about twenty thousand men, which was probably very near the mark. The Austrians, in the whole five days, lost in killed, wounded, and prisoners, about thirty thousand, and one hundred pieces of cannon.—See *First Bulletin*, 24th April 1809; PÉLET, ii. 99; and GRUNNE'S *Correspondence*, a copy of which the author obtained from the Imperial archives at Vienna, through the kindness of his valued friend, Captain Basil Hall.

confusion occurring as the last of the carriages withdrew into the town ; and nearly a thousand brave horsemen there sacrificed themselves for the safety of the rest of the army. The screen of cavalry which was drawn up round the bridge of boats, happily concealed its existence from the enemy till the troops were all over ; but the pontoons themselves were burned, or fell into the hands of the victors. At length, the rearguard was all withdrawn within the walls of Ratisbon, the gates closed, and the ramparts lined with infantry. Napoleon at noon arrived on the spot, and in his anxiety to press the assault, approached so near the walls, that a musket-ball struck him on the right foot, and occasioned a considerable contusion. The pain obliged him to dismount from his horse ; the report spread that the Emperor was wounded ; and instantly the soldiers broke from their ranks, and leaving their muskets, their guns, their horses, crowded round their beloved chief. Regardless of the cannon-balls which fell among the dense group, fifteen thousand men of all arms hastened to the spot, every one forgetting his own danger in intense anxiety concerning their general's welfare. After a few minutes, the wound was found to be so inconsiderable that the Emperor again mounted his horse ; a rapturous cheer from the warlike multitude announced the joyful event to the army ; and soon the rolling of the drums and clang of the trumpets recalled the soldiers in all directions to their arms.¹

This perilous incident retarded only for a few minutes the progress of the attack. Lannes, who directed the operations, perceiving a large house which rested against the rampart, pointed several guns against its walls, which speedily reduced them to ruins, and formed a sort of breach, by which access might be obtained to the summit. A heavy fire, however, was kept up from the rampart, which rendered the crossing of the glacis highly dangerous ; and for long, no soldiers could be found who would incur the hazard. Impatient of the delay, Marshal Lannes seized a scaling-ladder, and himself ran forward over the perilous space, swept in every part by the enemy's balls. Animated by this example, the troops rushed on, cleared the glacis, leaped into the ditch, and, crowding up the breach formed by the ruined house,

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

47.

Operations
against Ratis-
bon by the
French, and
wound of
Napoleon.¹ Sav. iv. 56,
57. Pel. ii.
103, 105.

48.

Its assault.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

forced their way into the place: LABEDOYERE, reserved for a melancholy fate in future times, was the first man who was seen on the summit. The troops now followed rapidly into the town: the gates, attacked in flank, were seized and opened, and the streets filled with a multitude of ferocious assailants. Still the Hungarian grenadiers maintained their resistance: slowly retiring towards the bridge, they kept up an incessant discharge upon their pursuers; the houses took fire in the conflict; the ammunition waggons were only rescued from the flames by the united efforts of both friends and foes; and, after losing half their numbers in the desperate strife, they reached the barricades of the bridge, where the cannonade from the opposite side was so violent as to render all further pursuit impossible. The French headquarters were established for the night in the convent of Prull, under the walls; in the course of it, the bridge was evacuated, and next day, the Austrian rearguard was discovered beyond Stadt-am-hoff, covering the retreat of the army to the woody heights of the Bohmervald.¹

¹ Stat. 162,
169. Jom. ii.
176, 177.
Pel. ii. 103,
111. Thib.
vii. 235, 236.
Sav. iv. 57,
58.

49.
Great results
of these
actions.

The advantages gained by these brilliant operations to Napoleon were very great. Twelve days only had elapsed since he left Paris; and already he had reassembled the army after its imprudent dispersion by Berthier, combated the Austrians on four successive days, separated Hiller and the Archduke Louis from the Archduke Charles, thrown the two former back upon the Inn, in too inconsiderable strength to be able to cover Vienna, and driven the latter to an eccentric retreat into the Bohemian mountains. Thirty thousand Austrians had fallen or been made prisoners in these disastrous engagements; a hundred pieces of cannon, six hundred ammunition waggons, two pontoon trains, and an immense quantity of baggage taken; and the spirit of the vanquished so thoroughly broken, as to render them incapable for some time of engaging in active operations. The road to Vienna lay open to the conqueror: it was a matter of mere convenience to him when he should step forward and seize the capital of the monarchy, its magnificent arsenal, and boundless resources of every kind. Twenty thousand men were lost to the French army;² but what were they amongst such a host, and what such a diminu-

² Jom. lii.
177.

tion compared to the incalculable moral influence upon his own troops and those of the allies, in consequence of such a series of successes at the very outset of the campaign ! If ever the words of Cæsar, *Veni, vidi, vici*, were applicable to a modern conqueror, they might have been used by Napoleon on this occasion.

It was by indefatigable activity, and the nicest calculation of time, that these astonishing results had been obtained ; and never had the Emperor displayed in a more striking manner the untiring energy of his character. Unwearied by a rapid journey, night and day, for six successive days from Paris, he no sooner arrived at Donauwerth, than he began the incessant questioning and correspondence, which, with him, were the invariable preludes to great achievements. His letters to his lieutenants during the next five days, would of themselves make a volume. His calculation of time was so exact, and the habits of precise obedience on the part of his generals so complete, that his divisions invariably arrived on the ground assigned them at the very moment on which he relied, and when their operation was required ; and generally again marched and combated on the day following, without any intermediate repose. By this means, though his forces were not, upon the whole, more numerous, at least at that period, than those of the Austrians, they were almost always greatly superior at the point of attack. Nor did the Emperor shun the fatigue which he thus imposed upon his soldiers : on the contrary, not one of them underwent any thing like the mental and bodily labour to which he subjected himself. From the morning of the 19th, when the battle of Abensberg began, till the night of the 23d, when that of Ratisbon terminated, he was on horseback, or dictating letters, at least eighteen hours a-day ; he had outstripped his own saddle-horses by the rapidity of his journey, and knocked up those of the King of Bavaria, by the fatigue they had undergone. When all around him were ready to drop down with exhaustion, he began to read and dictate despatches, and sat up half the night receiving reports from the generals and marshals, and completing the directions for the succeeding day.¹ He has himself told us, that his manœuvres at this period in Bavaria

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

50.
The indefatigable activity of Napoleon and his soldiers was the principal cause of these successes.

¹ Sav. iv. 53,
59. Thib. vii.
234. Pel. ii.
120, 121.

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

51.
Impressive
scene in the
conferring of
military hon-
ours at
Ratisbon.

were the most brilliant of his life;* and without going the length of so extraordinary an eulogium, it may safely be affirmed, that they never were excelled by the operations either of himself or any other general.

On the day following, the Emperor reviewed a great part of his army at Ratisbon, and one of those imposing spectacles was exhibited, which, almost as much as his military talents, contributed to his astonishing successes. As each regiment defiled before him, Napoleon demanded from the colonel who were the most deserving among the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, and in presence of the army conferred on them the honours and distinctions assigned to them. On these interesting occasions he himself decided on every case, and often conferred the reward on a common soldier, in preference to those of higher grade who were recommended. He recognised some of the veterans of Marengo or the Pyramids as they were presented to him, and when conferring the cross, gave them a signal of recognition by a slight tap on the cheek or clap on the shoulder, accompanied by a kind expression, as "I make you a baron or a chevalier." One of these veterans, on

¹ O'Meara, ii. 206.

* "The greatest military manœuvres I ever executed, and those for which I give myself most credit, were performed at Echnmühl, and were infinitely superior to those at Marengo, or to any other of my actions."¹ "On this day, I heard the Emperor repeat what I had often previously heard him say, that the finest manœuvres of his life were those which preceded the battle of Echnmühl."—LAS CASES, v. 168, 169.

The details of the grounds on which this striking opinion is formed, are thus given by Pelet, and quoted by Las Cases. "In four days of combats and manœuvres, were completed the destinies of the Austrian army—of that army, recently so numerous and arrogant, the most formidable and perfectly equipped which Austria had ever sent forth. By his first dispositions, Napoleon had organised the plan of his great battle, secured his outposts, and reconnoitred the ground for a battle in front of Augsburg, according to the direction which the enemy's columns seemed disposed to take. He had corrected the false dispositions of Berthier, and collected his forces in such masses on each wing, as to preclude the danger which he had induced. On the 18th April, he arrived on the ground and made his dispositions, and announced that in three days all would be accomplished: on the 19th it commenced, and the junction of the wings took place under the cannon of the Archduke: on the 20th, he broke the enemy's centre at Abensberg, and entirely separated their left wing from their centre: on the 21st, he routed the left wing at Landshut, got possession of its magazines, park equipages, and communications. Quick as lightning, he returned on the 22d to Echnmühl, to deal out his final blows against the army of the Archduke; the remains of which with difficulty saved themselves behind the walls of Ratisbon and the mountains of Bohemia. Had Massena, as he was ordered, attacked Landshut on the 21st, on the right bank of the Isar, at the same moment when Napoleon pressed him on the left bank, the remains of Hiller's corps would have been entirely destroyed: had Ratisbon not been delivered up to the Archduke, the remains of his army, cooped up in the bend formed by the Danube at that place, would have been utterly ruined. Thus, but for these untoward incidents, the vast army of the Archduke would have been cut to pieces in these four days; as it was, it was severed in two, and found salvation only in flight."—LAS CASES, v. 196.

being presented, asked the Emperor if he did not remember him. "How should I?" answered Napoleon.—"It was I," replied the soldier, "who in the desert of Syria, at the moment of your utmost necessity, gave you a portion of my rations." Napoleon at once recognised him, and said, "Oh! I recollect you perfectly, and make you a chevalier, with an annual endowment of twelve hundred francs," (£50.) These heart-thrilling scenes excited the usual transports among the French soldiers; but on the troops of the Confederation, upon whom honours and bounties were wisely and profusely showered, and to whom they were perfectly new, they produced an unbounded impression. It then appeared how strongly the German heart was capable of being moved by those appeals to honour and generous feeling, of which the Allied sovereigns in after times so largely availed themselves. At the same time, forty of the most deserving of the 65th regiment, which had capitulated at Ratisbon, were admitted into the Old Guard, to show that the Emperor entertained no displeasure at that corps for that untoward event; and a proclamation was addressed to the army, which, with just pride, though in exaggerated terms, recounted their great exploits.^{1*}

But though these splendid triumphs attended the arms of Napoleon, where he commanded in person, the fate of war was very different in other quarters; and already were to be seen convincing proofs, from the disasters attending them under the direction of his lieutenants, that the invincible veterans of the republic were fast wearing out, that the conscripts of the empire possessed no superiority over the now improved and invigorated armies, by which they were opposed, and that the successes, where he in person commanded, were owing to

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 111,
112. Thib.
vii. 237.

52.
Defeat of the
Bavarians by
Hiller.
April 24.

* "Soldiers, you have justified my anticipations; you have supplied by bravery the want of numbers, and marked the difference which exists between the soldiers of Cesar and the armed rabble of Xerxes. Within the space of a few days we have triumphed in the battles of Thaur, of Abensberg, and Ecmuhl, and in the combats of Pleissing, Landshut, and Ratisbon: one hundred pieces of cannon, forty standards, fifty thousand prisoners, three bridge equipages, three thousand baggage waggons with their horses, all the regimental caissons,—such are the fruits of the rapidity of your marches and of your courage. The enemy, seduced by a perjured cabinet, appeared to retain no recollection of you: his wakening has been speedy, for you have appeared more terrible than ever. Late he crossed the Inn and invaded the territory of our allies; lately he talked of nothing less than carrying the war into the bosom of our country: now defeated, dispersed, he flies in consternation. Already my advanced guard has passed the Inn; in a month we shall beat Vienna."—*NAPOLEON to his Troops, April 24, 1809; PELLET, ii. 115.*

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

the talent of his combinations or the terrors of his name. Hiller, who had retired to the Inn after the disaster of Landshut, finding that he was not pursued by the French troops, and having ascertained that Napoleon had diverged with the bulk of his forces in another direction, deemed it a favourable opportunity to take vengeance on the Bavarians, by whom he had been somewhat incautiously pursued, for the losses which he had experienced. Having collected some small reinforcements on the Inn, and divided his troops, about thirty thousand strong, into three columns, he remeasured his steps, and suddenly attacked the Bavarians under WREDE, who, along with the reserve under Bessières, were advancing beyond the defile of Neumareck, and had taken post on the heights in front of St Verti. The Bavarians made at first a stout resistance, but being outnumbered and outflanked, they were soon driven back; and though Molitor came up to support them with some regiments of the Imperial Guard, they too were compelled to retreat, and sustained a considerable loss. Before night the French and their allies were driven entirely off the field, with the loss of fifteen hundred men killed, wounded, and prisoners. But the intelligence which Hiller received in the night of the battle of Echmuhl and retreat of the Archduke upon Ratisbon, induced him to halt in the career of victory, and remeasure his steps to the Inn, in order to cover the approach to Vienna.¹

¹ Stat. 172,
176. Jom. iii.
178. Pel. ii.
166, 170.

53.
Successful
operations of
the Arch-
duke John in
Italy.

A disaster of a still more serious description was sustained about the same period, by the Viceroy Eugene Beauharnais, in the Italian plains. On the same day on which the Archduke Charles crossed the Inn, his brother, the Archduke John, passed the mountain frontier of the kingdom of Italy with forty-eight thousand men, and after defiling over the Isonzo at Gorizia, and going through Udina, poured down on the Italian plains, and took post in front of Passeriano, already famous in the diplomacy of Napoleon.* The viceroy had above forty-five thousand men to oppose the invader; but they were, in great part, of Italian extraction, and could hardly be relied upon to withstand the shock of the Transalpine forces. This inferiority speedily appeared in the first actions of the campaign. Eugene fell back across the

* *Ante*, c. xxvi. § 3.

Tagliamento, and established his headquarters at SACILE. The Austrians, two days after, came up in great force, and at Pordenone surprised the 35th French regiment, which, with its eagle and four pieces of cannon, fell into the enemy's hands. Stung to the quick by this disgrace, and fearful of the effect of any further retreat upon the spirit of his troops, the Viceroy determined to hold firm and give battle to the enemy. Orders accordingly were given for the whole army to suspend its retreat, and retrace its steps, on the 15th; and on the day following he made an attack on the Imperialists between Sacile and Pordenone.¹

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.
April 14.

¹ Erzsh.
Johan. Feld.
44, 52. Pel.
iii. 141, 152

The field of battle, which lay between Vigo-nuova and Porcia, on the gentle slopes where the Alps of Roveredo melt into the Italian plains, was singularly favourable for the operations of cavalry, in which arm the Austrians had considerably the advantage. So little did they anticipate, however, an attack, that at the moment when it commenced, the Archduke John was engaged in hearing mass at Pordenone, and one of his corps was considerably in the rear at Palse. The best dispositions, however, which circumstances would admit, were made to repel the enemy; and as the troops in the rear successively came up, they were passed on to the plain of Vigo-Nuova, so as to menace the communication between Eugene and the bridge of Sacile. The combat was very warm, and in the first instance, before the corps of Chastellar came up, Prince Eugene had the advantage; and at the village of Porcia, in particular, which was repeatedly taken and retaken, a frightful carnage took place. Gradually, however, the Austrians, who had outflanked their opponents, cooped up their line within very narrow limits; and at length it was driven into the space between Fontana, Fredda, and Porcia, which did not exceed two miles in breadth. Fearful of the consequences of any disaster upon troops confined within such narrow limits, Eugene gave the signal to retreat, which was effected at first by squares in echelon, which arrested their pursuers by alternate volleys as on a review day. But at the defile occasioned by the bridge of the Levinza and the marshes on either side of the stream, they fell into disorder, which was soon augmented by the intelligence that seven thousand men of the corps in reserve had

54.
Total defeat
of Eugene
Beauharnais
at Sacile.
April 16.

CHAP.
LVI.

1809.

¹ Erz.
Johan. Feld.
44, 52.
Pel. iii. 141,
163. Jom. iii.
179, 180.
Stat. 164,
169.

passed them, and already occupied Sacile. The whole army, upon this, fell into confusion. Horse, foot, and cannon became blended together in frightful disorder, and fled towards the Adige, without either direction or further attempt at resistance. The approach of night alone saved them from a total overthrow; but as it was, they lost four thousand killed and wounded, and an equal number of prisoners, besides fifteen pieces of cannon; while the Austrians had not to lament the loss of half the number.¹

55.
Important
effects of this
victory on the
Italian cam-
paign.

This important victory in the outset of the campaign was likely to prove decisive, as that of Magnano in 1799 had been,* of the fate of Italy, and would have been attended with not less material results upon the general issue of the war, had its effects not been obliterated, and the career of success in the plains of Lombardy arrested, by the rapid and overwhelming advance of Napoleon to Vienna. As it was, however, and even though the Archduke John was far from following up his successes with the vigour which might have been expected, the results of the battle were in the highest degree important. Eugene, reinforced by some battalions which he had left at Verona, succeeded in at length reorganising his army, and took post behind the fortified line of the Adige, already immortalised in the campaigns of Napoleon. The Archduke, though obliged to send three divisions at this period to observe Marmont in Dalmatia, and considerably weakened by the necessity of making large detachments to mask Venice and Palma-Nuova, in which the enemy had large garrisons, followed his retreating adversary, and took post, with thirty thousand excellent troops, in the famous position of Caldiero, a few miles from Verona. But the spirit of the two armies was essentially changed; the Italians, depressed and weakened by defeat, felt the old superiority of the Transmontane forces, and were prepared to fall back, as in the time of Suwarroff, to the furthest verge of the Italian Peninsula; while the Austrians, roused to the highest degree by their early success, confidently anticipated a repetition of the glories of Novi and the Trebbia.² But the expectations of both parties were traversed by the extraordinary progress of Napoleon down the valley of

² Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 53, 57.
Pel. iii. 163,
167. Stat.
179, 182.
Jom. iii. 180,
181.

the Danube, which soon rendered necessary the concentration of the whole forces of the monarchy for the defence of the capital.*

CHAP.
LVI.
1809.

Thus, though Napoleon's successes had been great on the Bavarian plains, he had by no means gained any decided advantage: his armies had been routed, or run the most imminent hazard, wherever he did not command in person; and disasters which would have been decisive in any other warfare had been experienced by his lieutenants on the Italian frontier. It was evident that the forces of the contending parties were approaching to an equality: the wonted vehemence of the Republican armies had disappeared when led by the marshals of France; the Austrians had clearly proved their superiority to the allies who swelled the columns of their adversaries; and it was the consummate talents, overwhelming force, and paralysing renown of Napoleon, that alone still chained victory to the standards of the Grand Army. Reversing the principles of both parties in the contest, the fortunes of France had come to depend on the genius of a single man—the pyramid rested on its apex. Driven by necessity to a more enlarged policy, Austria was reaping the fruits of popular enthusiasm, and successfully combating the revolution with the arms which itself had created. The aristocratic power, generally successful, failed only from the want of a leader adequate to the encounter of the popular hero; the democratic, elsewhere defeated, prevailed through the extraordinary abilities of one man. Such a state of matters might promise little for present success, but it was pregnant with hope for future deliverance. Great as may be the ascendancy, unbounded the activity of a single leader, they cannot, in the long run, compensate general disaster; and, in all prolonged contests, that power is ultimately destined to victory, which, appealing to principles that find a responsive echo in the human heart, rests upon the organised and directed efforts of the many, rather than the abilities, how splendid soever, of the few.

56.
Hopes which
the com-
mencement
of the cam-
paign afford-
ed to the
Allies.

* In the order of time, the war in the Tyrol should be treated of immediately after the opening of the campaign in Italy; but the vast moral importance of that contest, as well as its romantic character, require a separate chapter, and will be treated of in a following one, before that which narrates the battle of Wagram.

CHAPTER LVII.

CAMPAIGN OF ASPERN.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

1.

Measures of
Napoleon for
a grand con-
centric at-
tack upon
Vienna.

IMMEDIATELY after the battle of Ecmuhl, Napoleon, clearly perceiving the expediency of striking at the heart of his enemies' power before the consternation consequent on the disasters in Bavaria had subsided, issued orders in all directions for the concentration of his forces upon the Austrian capital. Orders were despatched on the 24th to Eugene, to press forward in the Italian plains; to Bernadotte, who had assumed the command of the Saxons at Dresden, without a moment's delay to enter Bohemia by the northern frontier; and to Poniatowski, who commanded the Polish army, to invade Galicia, and endeavour to excite an insurrection in that province against the Austrian dominion.* Every preparation was also made for moving the whole Grand Army, with the exception of Davoust's corps, which was left at Ratisbon to observe the Archduke, down the valley of the Danube, into the interior of the monarchy; and, by daybreak on the 26th, a hundred thousand men were in full march for the Inn and Vienna. At the same time, to impose upon Prussia, and overawe the numerous malcontents in the north of Germany,¹ a corps

¹ Pel. ii. 171,
173. Thib.
vii. 243. Sav.
iv. 59.

* To Eugene he wrote—"Advance in full confidence; the Emperor is about to move into the interior of Austria; the enemy will not keep their ground before you any more than they have done in Bavaria. Their army, defeated in its most cherished projects, is totally demoralised." To Bernadotte at Dresden—"Napoleon is about to march upon Vienna, and he expects, with the greatest impatience, your arrival in Bohemia, to co-operate with the Grand Army, which will at once render disposable the corps of Davoust, now left in observation at Ratisbon." To Poniatowski—"That he fully relied on his zeal in the common cause, and that, as the Emperor was about to march upon Vienna, now was the moment for him to enter Galicia."—See the original Letters in PELET, li. 172, 173.

of observation was formed, under the orders first of Kellerman, and afterwards of Junot, which, though consisting only of fourteen thousand men, was pompously announced in the bulletins as numbering fifty thousand combatants.

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

The situation of the Archduke Charles was now embarrassing in the highest degree. By having been driven off from the valley of the Danube, and compelled to take refuge in the mountains of Bohemia, the approach to the capital was left unguarded, save by Hiller's corps and that of the Archduke Louis, thirty-five thousand strong, which were wholly inadequate to arrest the march of the mighty conqueror. An ordinary general, indeed, responsible to his superiors, would hesitate to advance into the interior of the Austrian monarchy, leaving seventy-five thousand men on one flank in the Bohemian mountains, and the insurgent Tyrol, secure in inaccessible Alps, on the other, to menace or cut off his lines of communication. But it was not the character of Napoleon to be deterred by such obstacles. On the contrary, it was distinctly foreseen, what the event speedily proved was the case, that the French Emperor, relying on the power and terror of the army under his immediate command, would hurry forward to the capital, and trust to his never-failing resources to dissipate any assemblages on his flanks or rear by which his communication might be threatened. Impressed with these ideas, Prince Charles despatched orders on the 23d to Hiller, to retard as much as possible the advance of the enemy ; to the Archduke John, to retreat towards the Hereditary States ; while he himself, after forming a junction with Bellegarde, exerted himself to the utmost in reorganising his army, and, with the consent of the Emperor Francis, despatched a courier with a dignified letter proposing an exchange of prisoners, and hinting at more important negotiations to Napoleon who arrived, however, at the French headquarters after they had already been established in Upper Austria, and too late to arrest the dreaded march of the conqueror to Vienna.^{1*}

2.
Defensive
measures of
the Archduke
Charles.

April 23.

April 28.
1 Erz. Johan.
Feld. 49.
Stat. 178,
182. Pel. ii.
173, 179.

* To his brother the Emperor, the Archduke wrote—"Finding it impossible to keep my ground with a river such as the Danube in my rear against a victorious enemy in front, I have deemed it expedient to cross to the northern bank and form a junction with Count Bellegarde. You are aware that all the

CHAR.
LVII.

1809.

3.

Napoleon
advances to
the borders of
the Traun.

The Emperor's dispositions being all completed, the Grand Army was, to a certain extent, divided : Davoust, whose corps, exhausted by the fatiguing marches it had undergone, and seriously weakened by the losses of the campaign, stood in need alike of reinforcement and repose, was left at Ratisbon to guard the passage of the Danube, and watch the retiring columns of the Archduke ; Lefebvre, with the Bavarians, was detached into the Tyrol, to make head against the insurrection in that province, which was daily assuming a more menacing aspect ; while the Emperor himself, at the head of the corps of Massena, Lannes, and Bessières, still, notwithstanding all the losses of the campaign, above eighty thousand strong, proceeded direct by the great road along the southern side of the Danube to Vienna. Vandamme followed at a little distance, with the troops of the Confederation, eighteen thousand more ; and as soon as Bernadotte, with the Saxons, who was toiling round the external frontier of the Bohemian mountains, relieved Davoust at Ratisbon, he too was to follow in the same direction with his corps, still numbering forty thousand men. Every disposition being thus made to secure his rear, and station his troops in echelon, so as to ensure his communications, Napoleon left Ratisbon on the 26th, and arrived the same day at Landshut, where he found

April 26.

operations of the campaign were based on the probability of early success, and on the co-operation of the troops of the Rhenish Confederacy, who have, in fact, declared against us. Would it not be expedient, then, to try the result of a negotiation, before the enemy has invaded Austria, and while in Italy and Tyrol there remain successes to counterbalance his advantages ? " The Emperor despatched Count Stadion with his reply, which approved of overtures by the Archduke, provided they did not compromise his dignity. The latter accordingly wrote to Napoleon on the 30th April : " Your Majesty has announced your arrival by a salvo of artillery ; I had no time to reply to it ; but though hardly informed of your presence, I speedily discovered it by the losses which I sustained. You have taken many prisoners from me, and I have taken some thousands from you in quarters where you were not personally present. I propose to your Majesty to exchange them, man for man, rank for rank ; and, if that proposal proves agreeable to you, point out the place where it may be possible to carry it into effect. I feel flattered, sire, in combating the greatest captain of the age ; but I should esteem myself more happy if Heaven had chosen me to be the instrument in procuring for my country a durable peace. Whatever may be the events of war, or the chances of an accommodation, I pray your Majesty to believe that my desires will always outstrip your wishes, and that I am equally honoured by meeting your Majesty either with the sword or the olive branch in your hand."—But all this graceful flattery was thrown away ; for, before it reached Napoleon, he was far advanced in the valley of the Danube, and the terrible combat of Ebersberg had opened to him the gates of Upper Austria, where nothing remained to stay his triumphant march to Vienna.—ERZB. JOHANN'S *Feldzug in jahre 1809*, 55, 56 ; and PELET, ii. 176, 179.

the whole Guard, both horse and foot, assembled, having just come up from Spain. This veteran corps, full twenty thousand strong, proved a most important addition to his invading force; and when it is recollected that in the beginning of January it was at Astorga at the foot of the Galician mountains,* it must be admitted that few more rapid marches are on record in the whole annals of military achievement.¹

Meanwhile, the vanguard pressed on with ceaseless vigour, and soon the advanced posts were on the Inn. The rocky banks of that river, flanked by the ramparts of Brannau and Passau, afforded an apparently favourable situation for arresting the advance of the enemy; but the vast line, above thirty leagues in length, would have required a hundred thousand men for its defence, and the Austrian general had not above a third of that number at his disposal. For the same reason he contented himself with breaking down the bridges over the Salza, which had the effect of retarding, by two days, the advance of the French army. Napoleon arrived at Brannau on the 1st May, and pressed on with ceaseless activity the march of his troops; while Hiller, abandoning the woody range and unformed intrenchments of the Kirchbergwald, took post at the formidable position of EBERSBERG, to defend the passage of the Traun, and cover the wooden bridge, which at Mauthausen, or a little farther down the Danube, formed an important line of communication with the northern bank of the river. It was of the most vital consequence to gain possession of this post, for a few hours would suffice, with a corps such as Hiller's, to put it in a posture of defence; and if the Archduke, who was following by Budweiss down the left bank, should arrive before it was forced, it might retard, or altogether defeat, the projected march upon Vienna.²

The scenery in the vicinity of Salzburg, particularly that of the König See, the valley of Berchtholsgaden leading to it, the defile above Hallein, the Traun, Aber and Alter Sees, and the whole valley from the Danube up to Gasteins, is perhaps the most magnificent in Europe. It rivals the Grand Chartreuse in grandeur, and unites to

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 180,
181. Sav. iv.
60, 61. Stut.
182, 187.

4.
March of the
army to
Ebersberg.
April 28.

May 1.

² Jom. iii.
181. Pel. ii.
181, 199.
Sav. iv. 60,
61. Stut. 182,
187.

5.
Description
of the scenery
near Salz-
burg.

* *Ante*, c. lv. § 46.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

its romantic character the sublimity of the Gasteren Thal and the Oeschinen Thal, at the upper extremity of the valley of Kanderstog in Switzerland, the finest and most impressive scenery in the vast amphitheatre of the central Alps. No words, in particular, can do justice to the Konig See—a noble sheet of water, eight or ten miles in length, thirty miles to the south of Salzburg, shrouded amidst stupendous mountains, whose summits, ten thousand feet high, wrapped in eternal snow, almost overhang the lake which nestles in their bosom. Vast forests of fir lie immediately below the region of rock and snow in these lofty piles; and the cliffs which shut in the lake, several thousand feet in perpendicular height, descend abrupt and sheer to the water's edge, varied at intervals by noble woods of beech and oak, whose tints, especially in autumn, add inexpressible beauty to the near points of this matchless landscape.

¹ Personal
Observation.

6.
Causes of its
extraordinary
beauty.

The great superiority which the Alps in this quarter possess over those in the central cantons of Switzerland consists in this, that from their not rising from so elevated a plateau, the pine and the fir do not occur so uniformly and early in the scene; but rich forests of walnut, sycamore, beech, and oak, surmount, in the first instance, the green and grassy vales, where mountain freedom and laborious industry have spread a velvet carpet amidst the shapeless piles of rock, which primeval earthquakes have detached from the overhanging mountains. The pine and larch occur in a more elevated region, forming a sable band between the brilliant tints of the foliage beneath, and the pure glitter of the snow, or the gray hue of the rocks above. The mountains are not of such height as to be overloaded, or have their ravines filled with snow; naked, or sprinkled only in the upper parts with a silvery mantle, they exhibit all their romantic forms to the eye; and the enormous strata are disposed with such regularity, that at the distance even of twenty or thirty miles, every layer is distinctly visible, and the traveller feels as if he were approaching the ruined castles of the giants of the earth, some standing erect, some cast down and scattered in fragments around. Yet so steep and perpendicular are the sides, and so completely do they in many places overhang the lakes, that in rowing

along you can see reflected in the mirror all the gradations from the smooth shaven meadow, on the margin of the water, through the inaccessible cliffs rising abruptly from their sides, to the dark forests of the middle zone, and bare rocks of the upper region—you can touch with your hand the snowy summits of the mountains.*

Descending from the lofty summit of the Alps by lateral branches to the great valley of the Danube, several mountain streams between Munich and Vienna present scenes, the beauty of which is for ever engraven on the mind of the traveller, and afford, at the same time, favourable positions to dispute the advance of an invading army. Of these, the most impetuous and savage in its character is the Traun, which, issuing from the wild cliffs of the Alter and Aber Sees, and descending through the Traun See, makes its way through narrow ravines and steep pine-clad hills, to the Danube, a little below Ebersberg. A long wooden bridge crosses the stream in front of that place, which is commanded by the precipitous heights and old castle on its right or western bank : another existed some leagues higher up, at Wels. But the road over it crossed, a little farther on, another mountain torrent, the Krems Munster : and as all these bridges were of wood, which were easily destroyed, and required a considerable time for their reparation, the wing of the invader's army, which attempted the passage by that circuitous route, was liable to very serious interruption. Every thing, therefore, recommended an immediate attack upon the bridge of Ebersberg ; and Massena, who commanded the advanced guard, and was perfectly alive to all these considerations, resolved to pursue the enemy with such vigour, that they would not have time to apply the torch to the combustible arches.¹

The prudence of this determination, considering the vital importance of anticipating the Archduke at the bridge of Mauthausen, could not be disputed ; but, when the French arrived on the left bank of the Traun, beyond Scharlantz, in front of Ebersberg, the spectacle which

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

7.
Description
of the position
of Ebersberg.

¹ Pel. ii. 198,
203. Stut.
176, 184.
Jom. ii. 181.
Personal Ob-
servation.

8.
And of the
Austrian
corps which
occupied it.

* The author visited these incomparable scenes two-and-twenty years ago ; but the assistance of numerous sketches then made is not requisite to recall the features of the scenery to his memory ; they are indelibly imprinted there, and will remain engraven to the latest hour of his life.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

presented itself was sufficient to daunt the most intrepid breasts. Right in front of them lay the bed of the impetuous Traun, nearly eight hundred yards broad, intersected by many sand-banks and islands, clothed with stunted wood, traversed only by a single chaussée, terminating in a bridge three hundred yards long, over the largest arm of the river, which flows in a deep and rapid torrent, close to the right bank. The bridge, closed at its western extremity by the gate of Ebersberg, was enfiladed by the houses of the town, which were all filled with musketeers, and commanded along its whole extent by a plentiful array of artillery, disposed on the heights above. On the summit of the whole stood the old square castle, its walls bristling with bayonets, and with artillery planted on its mouldering battlements, to command the bridge, at the distance of a hundred toises. The hills, or rather swelling eminences next the river, were covered with deep masses of infantry interspersed with powerful batteries of cannon, who stood prepared to dispute the passage; while, immediately in their rear, rose a second range of heights, considerably more elevated than the former, clothed with pines, over which, equally with those in front, the road passed, and which afforded another position stronger than the first, to which, if driven from their original ground, the enemy might retire.¹

¹ Personal Observation. Pel. ii. 202, 205. Stat. 192, 195.

9.
Massena resolves to attack. Desperate gallantry of the French.

May 3.

It required no ordinary resolution to attack, with no greater force, thirty-five thousand men, supported by eighty pieces of cannon, in such a position; but Massena burned with desire to illustrate his name by some brilliant exploit in a campaign where hitherto he had not had an opportunity to signalise himself. He was in hopes, too, that, if the combat should be prolonged for any length of time, he would be aided by a flank attack from Marshal Lannes, who was to pass at Wels and force his way across the lesser streams in his front. He resolved, therefore, to hazard an assault. The French troops at that period were in such a state of exultation from their triumphs, that, under the eye of the Emperor at least, nothing was impracticable to their audacity. Four battalions of Austrian grenadiers had been injudiciously left on the left bank, occupying some houses

and walled enclosures, which formed a sort of *tête-du-pont* to the bridge. Upon them the attack was first made, and being speedily overwhelmed by numbers, they were driven at the point of the bayonet along the *chaussée*; and, in spite of a gallant resistance, all the islands and little bridges over the branches of the torrent were wrested from the enemy. But when the pursuers reached the long bridge over the principal branch of the Traun, the fire of grape and musketry from the batteries and houses on the opposite side was so violent that the head of the column hesitated, and recoiled. Instantly General Cohorn, a descendant of the illustrious engineer of the same name, advanced to their head, and, animated by his gallant example, the French troops returned to the charge. A frightful scene, exceeding in horror even the terrible passage of the bridge of Lodi, ensued. At the point of the bayonet, amidst showers of balls, the heroic French, headed by Cohorn, pursued the retiring Austrians; while the troops on the opposite bank, seeing the enemy's colours advancing through a cloud of smoke, and in the midst of a frightful contest, closed the gate at the further end, and fired incessantly with grape, round-shot, and canister, indiscriminately on friend and foe.¹

Numbers of the Imperialists, threatened with death on both sides, threw themselves into the water, and were swept away by the impetuous torrent; others were trampled down by the advancing columns, or sought refuge in the wooded islands, and were made prisoners. Several ammunition waggons blew up on the middle of the bridge, and the dauntless foemen were scattered in the air by the tremendous explosion. But nothing could withstand the enthusiastic gallantry of the French. Side by side, Cohorn and Campy, aide-de-camp to Massena, headed the column: soon the gate and palisades flanking it were levelled by the pioneers, and the assailants penetrated into the town. Here, however, they were exposed at once to a plunging fire from the castle, and a flanking one from the houses, while fresh battalions assailed them in front. Torn in pieces by the terrific discharge, to which, in the crowded streets of an ancient village, they could make no reply, they speedily fell victims to their daring valour. In a few minutes two-thirds of their number

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Sav. iv. 60,
61. Jom. ii.
181. Pel. ii.
202. Stat.
194, 196.

10.
After a fright-
ful struggle
the post is
still main-
tained.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 202,
209. Stut.
194, 199.
Sav. iv. 61,
62. Jom. ii.
181, 182.

were stretched upon the pavement; the survivors were driven back in confusion to the entrance of the bridge; its barricades, hastily re-established, were closed, lest it should again fall into the hands of the enemy, and the Austrians were preparing a column to clear it of the assailants, and set fire to the combustibles already provided, which, in the suddenness of the former assault, had not been fired.¹

11.
After a des-
perate
struggle the
French gain
the pass.

Massena, however, who had now come up to the opposite bank, was well aware of the importance of following up the extraordinary advantage gained by the brilliant courage of his advanced guard. Accordingly, he instantly despatched powerful succours to Cohorn and his handful of heroes, now cooped up between the gate at the end of the bridge and the rapidly increasing forces of his assailants. Three fresh brigades, headed by Claparede, were soon passed over; and at length the division Le Grand having come up, it also was sent forward,* through a storm of grape and musketry, over the bridge, and lent its powerful aid to the attacking force. Strengthened by such assistance, Claparede regained his ground in the village, and gradually forced his way up the narrow lanes leading to the castle, and stormed that stronghold itself. Hiller, however, recovered from his first surprise, renewed his efforts to regain the post: two fresh divisions came up, drove the French out of the chateau, and forced them down again into the low streets adjoining the bridge. Again the French returned to the assault: Massena ordered a division to cross over farther up the river to the right, in order to attack the left of the Imperialists, while engaged with their unwearied antagonists in front. Amidst a frightful storm of shot, Le Grand swiftly passed over the narrow open space which separated the town from the castle: but even in that distance of two hundred yards, the path of every regiment was marked by a long and melancholy train of slain: arrived at the gates, they were found to be closed, and the whole head of the column was swept away by the plunging fire from the battlements.² Again reinforced, Le Grand returned to

² Pel. ii. 209,
213. Stut.
203, 205. Nor.
iii. 209.

* As Le Grand debouched from the bridge, the French general in command there rather officiously tendered his advice:—"I want none of your advice," said he, "but room for the head of my columns;" and instantly passed on to the attack of the castle.—*PELLET*, ii. 211.

the assault, under cover of a tremendous fire of all arms, which brought down every exposed man on the castle ; the sappers rushed up to the gates, which they broke through, and the heroic garrison, cut off from all external support by the columns which had got round it on the eastern side, laid down its arms.

CHAP.

LVII.

1809.

Hiller now, seeing the key of the position carried, gave the signal for retreat ; but to troops so intermingled and closely engaged with the enemy, it was no easy matter to obey this order. The division which had crossed farther up the river already threatened their left flank, for in the hurry of this sudden attack there had not been time to break down the bridges of the Krems Munster, and other streams which discharge themselves into the Traun above Ebersberg, which, if destroyed, would for some hours at least have secured that flank from attack. With great difficulty the Austrians withdrew to the position behind the town, where another combat not less obstinate and bloody took place. Every road, every pathway leading up the ascent was the scene of a desperate struggle. The pastures, the corn fields, the pine woods on the crest of the ridge, were all the theatre of mortal combat ; while the flames of Ebersberg in the hollow behind, the trampling of horsemen over the dead and dying, the cries of the wounded, and the cheers of the soldiers who successively arrived on the opposite bank, formed a scene surpassing all but the field of Eylau in circumstances of horror. The combat, however, was too critical and violent to admit of any relaxation ; and as the French cavalry of the Guard came up to the opposite side, they were hastily hurried forward, and trampling under-foot the dead bodies and wounded of either army, forced their way through the burning houses, with loud shouts, swords glittering, banners waving, and all the animation of war, to the front of the battle. Still the Austrians, with invincible resolution, made good the post on the ridge behind ; but as evening approached, the masses on their left flank which had crossed at Wels, and other places in the upper part of the stream, became so threatening that Hiller drew off his troops, and fell back in the night to Enns, where he burned the bridge over the river of the same name, and continued his retreat towards Amstetten.¹ In this terrific combat

12.

Hiller falls
back towards
Vienna.

¹ Pel. ii. 209,
215. Stut.
202, 207.
Norv. iii. 209,
Jom. ii. 182,
183.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

few trophies were taken by the victors; the French could only boast of four guns and two standards wrested from the enemy, while on each side six thousand brave men had fallen a sacrifice to their heroic sense of patriotic duty.*

13.
Advance of
the French
army towards
Vienna.

This severe loss altogether disabled Hiller from making any further resistance to the advance of the invading army to Vienna; and he accordingly fell back, as fast as the encumbrance of so many wounded would permit, to the neighbourhood of the capital. Napoleon arrived on the opposite side of the Traun to Ebersberg, during the latter period of the combat, and passed through the town soon after it had ceased. However much inured to scenes of carnage, he was strongly impressed by the unwonted horrors which there presented themselves, where brave men by thousands lay weltering in their blood, amidst burning rafters and smoking ruins, and the first who had fallen were thrown into the river, or crushed under the feet of the horses, or by the wheels of the artillery which had since passed over them.† He testified accordingly considerable indignation, both at Massena for provoking so desperate a contest, where a flank movement might have rendered it unnecessary; and at Lannes, whose corps was to cross at Wels, farther up the river, for not having made his dispositions so as to be up in time to take a part in the strife, by attacking the flank or rear of Hiller's corps. After passing Ebersberg, however, being uncertain of the movements of the Archduke, and fearful of advancing into the interior without being aware of the position of his principal adversary, he halted for two days at Enns, re-established the bridge, and collected a number of boats,¹ which he already foresaw would be required for the difficult

From 4th to
7th May.
1 Stat. 201,
202. Pel. iii.
220, 235.
• Join. ii. 182,
183.

* The author has been the more particular in the description of this combat, not only from its peculiar and terrible character, but because the castle and bridge of Ebersberg form well-known objects to every traveller who has visited Vienna; and it is desirable that the multitude of English who frequent that capital in quest of pleasure or amusement, should be aware of the heroic deeds of which the Gothic castle, under whose walls they pass, has been the theatre.

† During this terrible action, the bridge and street immediately leading from it were so encumbered with the wounded, that Massena was driven to the cruel necessity of commanding the fresh troops which came up to throw their maimed comrades into the river; and such of them as were struck down were treated in the same manner by those who next came up to the attack. There was no alternative, for else the causeway would soon have become impassable, and the division in front have been entirely cut off.—See CADET DE GRASSECOURT'S *Voyage en Autriche à la suite de l'Armée Française*, 1809, p. 173.

operation of crossing the Danube in front of Vienna ; while his advanced guard, under Lannes and Massena, pursued their route by the great road to the capital.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

Anticipating a battle on the woody ridge which lies between St Polten and Vienna, the Emperor concentrated his troops before attempting the passage of that defile ; but the precaution was unnecessary. Hiller had received orders to cross the Danube, and fall back, with all his forces, to the neighbourhood of the metropolis, and occupy the islands until the arrival of the Archduke. Meanwhile, continuing his advance along the Danube, he perceived, from the Abbey of Melk, situated on a high rock, a considerable encampment of soldiers on the left bank of the river. Devoured with anxiety to know to which army they belonged, he despatched a sergeant of the Old Guard and six chosen men ; who soon made their way across in a boat, and brought over three Austrian soldiers, who reported that they belonged to the Archduke's army, and that he was advancing by forced marches, in hopes of arriving at the capital before the enemy. This important intelligence made Napoleon redouble his activity ; orders were given to Massena to watch, with the utmost vigilance, all the points where a passage of the Danube could be effected, while Lannes and Bessières were directed to advance with increased celerity to the capital. All arms accordingly pressed on with the utmost expedition ; and, on the 10th of May, being exactly a month from the time when the Austrian standards' crossed the Inn, the French eagles appeared before the walls of Vienna.¹

14.
And arrives
before that
city.

May 8.

May 9.
¹ Pel. ii. 220,
254. Stat.
203, 212.
Jom. ii. 182,
186.

Riding from Melk towards St Polten, with Berthier and Lannes, the Emperor's eyes were riveted on the Gothic towers of Diernstein, the scene of the captivity of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, which rose in gloomy magnificence at some distance on the other side of the Danube. His attention was instantly absorbed by that interesting object. He could speak for long on no other subject. "He also," said Napoleon, "had been a warrior in Syria and Palestine. He was more fortunate than we at St Jean de Acre, but not more valiant than you, my brave Lannes. He beat the great Saladin. And yet hardly had he returned to Europe, than he fell into the hands of persons who certainly were of a very different calibre. He

15.
Napoleon's
observations
on Richard
Cœur-de-
Lion.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

was sold by a Duke of Austria to an Emperor of Germany, who has been rescued from oblivion by that act alone. The last of his court, Blondel, alone remained faithful to him ; but his nation made great sacrifices for his deliverance." Still keeping his eyes riveted on the towers, he continued,—“These were barbarous times, which they have the folly to represent to us as so heroic ; when the father sacrificed his children, the wife her husband, the subject his sovereign, the soldier his general, and all without shame or disguise, from the mere thirst of gold or power ! How much are times changed now ! what progress has civilisation made in our time ! You have seen emperors, kings, in my power, as well as the capitals of their states, and I exacted from them neither ransom nor sacrifice of honours. And that successor of Leopold and Henry, who is already more than half in our power, will not be worse treated on this occasion than the preceding !” How deceitful is self-love ! The ransom which Napoleon had exacted, on the very last occasion, from Austria (£5,000,000) and from Prussia (£16,000,000), far exceeded all that feudal cupidity had ever extorted ; and in the dark annals of Gothic crime and treachery, nothing ever outdid the cruelty of the French Revolution, or the perfidy of his own seizure of the thrones of the Spanish Peninsula.¹

¹ Pelet, ii.
246, 247.

16.
Ineffectual
attempt to
defend
Vienna.

Though deprived, by the passage of Hiller to the northern bank of the Danube, of the corps on which it had chiefly relied for protection, Vienna was by no means destitute of resources. The external barriers, indeed, were not in a condition to make any defence ; and the Archduke Maximilian, to whom the command was intrusted, withdrew at once from the rich and extensive suburbs into the ancient walled capital. The walls were constructed, however, of solid granite, well armed with artillery, and capable of being supplied to any extent from the resources of the arsenal ; while four thousand regular troops, and eight thousand landwehr and volunteers, were in arms within the city. Great efforts were made to electrify the inhabitants ; and patriotic ardour was at its highest pitch. The people talked of their glorious resistance, one hundred and twenty years before, to the Turks, and loudly proclaimed their resolution to emulate the noble defence of Saragossa in

more recent times. But all history demonstrates, that there is one stage of civilisation when the inhabitants of a metropolis are capable of such a sacrifice in defence of their country, but only one; and that when passed, it is never recovered. The event has proved that the Russians, in 1812, were in the state of progress when such a heroic act was possible; but that the inhabitants of Vienna and Paris had passed it. Most certainly the citizens of London would never have buried themselves under the ruins of the Bank, the Treasury, or Leadenhall Street, before capitulating to Napoleon. In fact, without supposing that the members of a highly civilised and opulent community have altogether lost their patriotic spirit, it is evident that the sacrifices which are unavoidable, if obstinate resistance is attempted by a city in the later stages of society, where wealth is concentrated, credit universal, and hundreds of thousands would at once be reduced to beggary by its stoppage, are so great, that no moral courage, however intrepid, is equal to the responsibility of incurring them.¹

Napoleon wisely trusted to two methods to effect the reduction of the city,—the cutting off its communication with the northern bank of the river, and the horrors of a bombardment. With this view, he directed Massena to make himself master of the island of Prater, while a similar attack was made on that of Jägerhaus by Lannes, so as to reach from both sides the great bridge of Spitz and Thabor. These attacks were entirely successful, for the Archduke had not forces sufficient to defend them; and such had been the confident security of the Aulic Council, that they had not taken the simple precaution of connecting the works of the place with the bridges of the Danube. At the same time a battery of twenty mortars was established nearly on the same ground from which the Turks had, a hundred and twenty years before, bombarded the city; and with such vigour were they served, that in the next ten hours they discharged three thousand projectiles into the capital; and already, in the course of the night, it was in flames in several quarters.²

At that period, there lay sick in the Imperial palace, directly opposite to the French batteries, and incapable of bearing removal to a place of safety, a young princess,

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 262,
270. Jom. iii.
187. Stut.
208, 215.
Sav. iv. 64,
66.

17.
Napoleon's
measures to
reduce
Vienna.

May 12.
² Pel. ii. 262,
278. Thib.
vii. 255. Jom.
iii. 187. Stut.
209, 218.
Sav. iv. 65,
69.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

18.
Napoleon's
first atten-
tions to the
future Em-
press Marie
Louise.

daughter of the illustrious House of Hapsburg. It was by the thunders of artillery, and the flaming light of bombs across the sky, that Napoleon's first addresses to the Archduchess MARIE LOUISE were paid. Informed of the dangerous situation of the noble invalid, he ordered the direction of the pieces to be changed; and while the midnight sky was incessantly streaked by burning projectiles, and conflagration was commencing in every direction around her, the future Empress of France remained secure and unharmed in the Imperial palace. Strange result of those days, not less of royal than national revolution! that a daughter of the Cæsars should be wooed and won by a soldier of fortune from Corsica: that French arms should be exerted to place an Austrian princess on the throne of Charlemagne: that the leader of a victorious invading host should demand her for his bride; and that the first acts of attention should be rendered amid the deep booming of the mortars, which, but for his interposition, would have consigned her father's palace to destruction.¹

¹ Pel. ii. 278,
Thib. vii. 255.
Norv. iii. 211,
212.

19.
The Arch-
duke Maxi-
milian
abandons
Vienna,
which capi-
tulates.

Aware of the danger of his situation, if cut off from all communication with the Danube and the powerful armies on the north bank of that river, the Archduke Maximilian made an attempt, at one in the morning of the following day, to regain the Lusthaus, an important point, which would have hindered the formation of the bridge the French were preparing from the southern bank of the first island; but the attack, not supported with adequate force, was speedily repulsed. Despairing, after that check, of being able to maintain his ground in the capital, and intimidated by the sight of the flames which were bursting forth in many quarters, the Archduke resolved to abandon it to its fate. The troops of the line, accordingly, with the exception of a few hundred invalids, were withdrawn to the north bank by the great bridge of Thabor, which was immediately afterwards burned. They were just in time; for so rapid had been the progress of the French troops between the battlements and the river, that in a few hours more their retreat would have been irrevocably cut off, and the bridge gained. General O'Reilly, who was left in command, now lost no time in signifying his readiness to capitulate;² and the terms were soon agreed to, and ratified early on the following morning.

May 12.

May 13.
² Stat. 217,
224. Pel. ii.
276, 289.
Jom. iii. 188.
Sav. iv. 67,
68.

They were the same as those granted in 1804, guaranteeing the security of private property of every description, but enforcing the surrender of all public stores, and in particular the magnificent arsenal, containing four hundred pieces of cannon, and immense artillery stores of every description. Fifty guns in addition, which were on their route for Hungary, were captured by Massena, before they had got many miles from the capital.

The capture of Vienna was a prodigious stroke for Napoleon; affording him, as it did, a fortified post on the Danube, amply provided with military stores of every description, and which it was impossible to starve out for fear of destroying the inhabitants of the metropolis. The French troops took possession of the gates at noon on the 13th, and at that period the positions of the different corps of their army were as follows:—The corps of Lannes, with four divisions of cuirassiers of the reserve cavalry, and all the Guards, were stationed at Vienna: Massena, between that capital and the Simmering, with his advanced posts occupying the Prater, and watching the banks of the Danube: Davoust, who had come up from Ratisbon, was advancing in echelon along the margin of that river, between Ebersberg and St Polten, with his headquarters at Melk: Vandamme, with the Wirtemburghers under his orders, guarded the important bridge of Lintz; while Bernadotte, who had at length completed his circular march round Bohemia, with the Saxons,* and other troops of the Confederation, about thirty thousand strong, had arrived at Passau, and was advancing to form the reserve of the Grand Army. Lefebvre, with the Bavarians, was fully engaged in a desperate strife in the Tyrol; but independent of his corps, the Emperor had a hundred thousand men concentrated between Lintz and Vienna, besides a reserve of thirty thousand approaching to reinforce them from the upper Danube.†

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

20.
Positions of
the different
corps of the
French
armies in the
middle of
May.

¹ Pel. ii. 286,
288. Jom. iii.
188, 190.

* Napoleon was exceedingly displeased at the tardy movements and inefficient condition of the Saxons during this period, and shortly before had addressed the following letter to their general Bernadotte, on the subject. "The foot artillery of the Saxons is extremely defective. What I want is warlike troops, and experienced generals to direct their movements. The Saxons are incapable of acting by themselves. There is not one of their generals to whom I can venture to intrust a detached operation. With Frenchmen I can feel assured of energy and experience in the troops; but the Saxons can do nothing. It is indispensable that they should be strengthened and stimulated by the example of troops more warlike than themselves."—PELLET, ii. 241.

† On entering Vienna, Napoleon addressed the following proclamation to his

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

21.

Movements
of the Arch-
duke Charles,
and position
of his army.

May 3.

While these rapid successes were achieved by the Grand Army, the Archduke Charles, with a tardiness which is to this day inexplicable, was pursuing his route from Bohemia towards the capital. After his retreat from Ratisbon, on the 23d of April, he retired to Horasdiowitz, in the southern part of that province, and was followed by Davoust as far as Straubing, who so far imposed upon the prince as to make him believe that he was pursued by the whole French army. This natural but unfounded illusion, was attended with the most unfortunate consequences. Conceiving that Hiller would be perfectly adequate to restrain any incursion of a detached corps towards the capital, he made his dispositions so as to draw upon himself the weight of the invading army, deeming that the most effectual way to ward off the danger from the capital. No sooner was he undeceived in this particular, than he despatched the most pressing orders to Hiller to defend his ground as long as possible, so as to give him time to join the main army by the bridges of Lintz or Mauthausen, and he himself set out by forced marches to join him at one or other of these points. It was to gain time for the effecting of this junction, that Hiller, who had not force sufficient to make head at Lintz, maintained so desperate a resistance at Ebersberg. But that action took place on the 3d May, and on the evening of the same day the Archduke arrived at Budweiss with the bulk of his army, about forty leagues to the north-west of Vienna. At that place he remained *for three days*; a delay which was the more inexplicable, as he heard, in the course of the 4th, of the forcing of the bridge of Ebersberg, which in effect opened the road to the capital to the French army. In truth, he was impressed with the idea

troops:—"Soldiers! In a month after the enemy passed the Inn, on the same day, at the same hour, we entered Vienna. Their landwehrs, their levies *en masse*, their ramparts, created by the impotent rage of the princes of the House of Lorraine, have fallen at the first sight of you. The princes of that house have abandoned their capital, not like soldiers of honour, who yield to circumstances and the reverses of war, but as perjurers haunted by the sense of their own crimes. In flying from Vienna, their orders have been murder and conflagration: like Medea, they have, with their own hands, massacred their offspring. Soldiers! the people of Vienna—according to the expression of a deputation of the suburbs—abandoned, widowed, shall be the object of our regard. I take its good citizens under my special protection; as to the turbulent and wicked, they shall meet with exemplary justice. Let us exhibit no marks of haughtiness or pride; but regard our triumphs as a proof of the Divine justice, which punishes, by our hands, the ungrateful and the perjured."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 256; *Moniteur*, 29th May 1809.

that Napoleon would never advance to Vienna while so formidable an army menaced his line of communication; and accordingly, instead of hastening towards it, he merely pushed on Kollowrath with twenty thousand men towards the bridge of Lintz, and sent orders to the Archduke John to abandon Italy, and make for the same point; vainly hoping that the concentration of such forces in his rear would compel Napoleon to abandon his attack on the capital.¹

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

May 8.
1 Pel. ii. 253,
254. Stut.
230. Jom. iii.
183.

Awakened, at length, by the pressing representations of the Archduke Maximilian, to the necessity of instantly providing for the protection of Vienna, he commanded Hiller, who, in obedience to his orders, had passed over, after the combat at Ebersberg, by the bridge of Mautausen to the northern bank, to advance by forced marches to the metropolis; and, breaking up from Budweiss on the morning of the 8th, he himself followed in the same direction. But it was too late; the repose of three days at that place had given his indefatigable adversary the start of him by a day. Hiller received his orders on the 10th, at two in the morning, and, marching twelve leagues that day, reached, with his advanced guard, Nussdorf, a league from Vienna, before night, but found the town already invested; while the Archduke advanced by Twetel towards Krems, hoping still to be in time to throw himself between the invader and the capital. Notwithstanding all their efforts, however, they were too late. Hiller, indeed, occupied the isles of the Danube on the 11th, the day before the Archduke Maximilian withdrew from the city, but not in time to prevent its complete investiture; and the advanced guard of the Archduke Charles reached the northern extremity of the bridges late on the evening of the 15th, when the enemy was already fully established in the capital. But for the delay at Budweiss, and the order to Hiller to cross over to the northern bank, the army would have been up in time to combat for Vienna; for on the 16th, the junction was fully effected with Hiller a few miles to the north of Vienna, on the left bank of the river; and as from Budweiss to that place is just six days' march, Prince Charles, who arrived at this first town on the 4th, might have reached the capital with ease on the evening of the 11th,

22.
The Arch-
duke at
length ad-
vances to-
wards Vienna.

May 13.

May 16.

2 Pel. ii. 253,
258. Jom. iii.
183, 185.
Stut. 230,
235.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

twenty-four hours before it actually surrendered, and long before, if garrisoned by the united forces of Hiller and Maximilian, consisting of thirty thousand good troops, it could possibly have been reduced.

23.
Retreat of the
Archduke
John from
Italy.

April 29.

The disasters in Bavaria, and the rapid advance of Napoleon to Vienna, produced an immediate change on the aspect of affairs in the Italian plains. Cut short in the career of victory, not less by the necessity of making considerable detachments to the right and left, to watch the progress of Marmont in Dalmatia, and aid the insurrection in the Tyrol, than by the peremptory orders of the Archduke Charles to draw near to the Hereditary States for the defence of the capital, the Archduke John broke up from the position of Caldiero on the Adige. In order to conceal his real intentions, he made, on the 29th April, several attacks on the enemy, but without effecting his object; for Eugene was aware of the events in Bavaria, and had concentrated his troops to resume the offensive the moment that his adversary retired. Orders arrived on that day from Vienna, to suspend as little as possible his offensive operations in Italy; but to open a communication with Hiller, who was to fall back to the Enns; and to be prepared to maintain himself in Styria, Carinthia, and the Tyrol, as a vast fortress, where he could keep his ground though detached altogether from the other Imperial armies. The Archduke John, however, was of an opposite opinion, and, deeming it indispensable to concentrate all the forces of the monarchy in the centre of the Hereditary States, he stated his intentions of acting differently in a despatch to the Emperor Francis on 30th April, and on the first May commenced his retreat by Friuli. Eugene followed the enemy leisurely, and the Austrians reached the Brenta without sustaining any loss, where Prince John was distracted by new orders from the Archduke Charles, dated Cham, 29th April, directing him to co-operate with the intended movement of the general-in-chief, from the north bank of the Danube upon Lintz, so as to threaten the enemy's communications. But the progress of events both on the Danube and the Italian plains disconcerted all these projects, and rendered a retreat upon Vienna, in Prince John's opinion, a matter of necessity.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
224, 225.
Pel. iii. 180,
195. Erz.
Johan,
Feldz. 104,
107.

Retired behind the Piave, the Archduke conceived it practicable to defend the course of that torrent, and thereby both arrest the enemy's progress in that quarter, and maintain a position from which either the projected lateral movement upon Lintz, or the ultimate retreat upon Vienna, might be effected. Like all the other streams which, in the lower parts of Lombardy, descend from the summits of the Alps to the Italian plains, this river flows in the middle of an immense gravelly bed, elevated for the most part above the adjoining meadow, and fordable in all parts except after heavy rains. At that season, however, the melting of the snows in the higher Alps rendered the torrent swollen, and made any attempt to cross a hazardous operation. But, finding that the spirits of his troops had been most powerfully elevated by the triumphs of the Grand Army, Eugene resolved to attempt the passage by main force; and hoped, by rivaling the brilliant exploit of Napoleon at the passage of the Tagliamento,* to wipe out the disgrace of his defeat at Sacile. The attempt was made on the 8th May at two points, viz. the fords of Toreillo and St Nichol, distant two miles from each other, in front of Lovadina. Dessaix, with six battalions, crossed at the first of these points at daybreak; but he had no sooner drawn up his troops in square, on the opposite bank, than they were charged with great vigour by three thousand Austrian horse. The Imperial cavalry, notwithstanding the most gallant exertions, were unable to break that solid mass of infantry. Had a body of foot-soldiers been at hand to support their attacks, or cannon to break the firm array of the enemy, without doubt their efforts would have proved successful; but the infantry, considerably behind, could not get up in time; and meanwhile, Eugene succeeded in bringing up a large body of French horse, which quickly passed over, and by charging the Imperial cavalry in their turn, relieved the grenadiers, now almost sinking under the fatigues of the continued combat, from the weight which had oppressed them.¹

Wolfskehl, however, who commanded the Austrian dragoons, turned fiercely on these new assailants. The Imperial horsemen, the flower of their army, fought

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

24.

Battle of the
Piave.
May 8.

¹ Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 1809,
99, 104. Pel.
iii. 196, 201.
Jom. iii. 225,
226.

* *Ante*, chap. xxiii. § 10.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

25.

Defeat of the
Austrians.

bravely : a terrible combat ensued, in which their gallant commander was slain ; and it was not till half their number were stretched on the plain, and an overwhelming superiority of force had rendered further resistance unavailing, that these intrepid cavaliers fell back upon their infantry, who were slowly advancing to the charge. The foot-soldiers were ridden over and thrown into confusion by the flying dragoons : disorder speedily spread in the columns ; several cannon and large quantities of baggage were taken ; and it was only by bringing up in person the reserve of grenadiers that the Archduke succeeded in arresting the rout. Meanwhile, as the waters of the Piave still continued to rise from the melting of the snows in the mountains, Eugene hastily constructed a bridge of boats, by means of which Macdonald's division was crossed over, which was soon followed by that of Grenier and the rest of the army ; Dessaix, with his unconquerable squares, still keeping his ground in front, and covering the deploying of the columns to the right and left. At two in the afternoon, Eugene, having collected thirty thousand foot and six thousand horse on the left bank, marched forward to attack the enemy ; but the Archduke was already in full retreat by the great road of Cornegliano, which was effected in excellent order, though not without much bloody fighting ; the numerous canals, dykes, and hollow ways of the country affording every facility for arresting the progress of the enemy. In this disastrous affair, in which the Austrian commanders vainly attempted to defend seven leagues of a fordable river, and uselessly sacrificed their noble cavalry by bringing it into action against infantry without the aid either of foot or cannon, the Archduke John lost nearly six thousand men, fifteen guns, and thirty caissons, while the French had not to deplore the fall of more than four thousand. But what was far more important, he lost the whole moral influence of the victory of Sacile ; and the *prestige* of success, with all its incalculable effects, had passed over to the enemy.¹

¹ Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 1809,
99, 110. Pel.
iii. 196, 207.
Jom. iii. 225,
227. Thib.
vii. 265.

After this defeat, the Archduke John retired without any further struggle, and without being disquieted in his retreat, to Villach in Carinthia. The strong forts which he had constructed at Malborghetto, Tarwis, and Prediel,

roads to that town, and at the Prevald on that to Laybach, gave him the means of effecting this movement without any molestation. Arrived at Villach, he received intelligence of the fall of Vienna, and, at the same time, a letter from the Archduke Charles, of 15th May, directing him to move with all his forces upon Lintz.* Conceiving that these orders had now become impracticable, and that the reduction of the capital had totally extinguished the object for which they had been framed, the Archduke unfortunately thought that he must act for himself, and take counsel from the disastrous circumstances in which the monarchy was placed. Impressed with these ideas, instead of turning his face towards Lintz, he directed his march to Gratz, and sent orders to Jellachich—who had been detached in the first instance to the northward, towards Salzburg, to open up a communication with Hiller and the corps which might operate towards Lintz—to retreat in the same direction, by following the romantic defiles of the Muhr. There he arrived on the 24th, without any further engagement, and descended into the plains of Hungary, having abandoned the Tyrol, with its heroic defenders, the forts on the crest of the mountains which had covered his own retreat, with their gallant garrisons, and the whole projected operations on the upper Danube, to their fate.¹

The French advanced guard crossed the frontier of the Austrian States on the 14th, on the Ponteba; and speedily, in great strength, surrounded the fort of Malborghetto. When summoned to surrender, the commander replied, “that his orders were to defend himself, and not to negotiate;” and the intrepidity of the defence corresponded with such an announcement. The works consisted of a rampart of wood surmounting a ditch, and enclosing a wooden tower three stories

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

26.

Retreat of the
Austrians
from Italy
into Hungary.
May 17.

¹ Pel. iii. 214.
223. Jom. iii.
227, 229.
Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 124,
135.

27.

Capture of
the mountain
forts of Carin-
thia and
Styria by the
French.
May 14.

* The orders, dated Enzersdorf, 15th May 1809, were quite precise:—“To march from Villach by Spital and Salzburg, on the Danube; to summon to his aid the corps of Jellachich, to co-operate with Kollowrath, who, at the same period, was to be before Lintz, on the left bank of the river, and to act in unison on the rear and communications of Napoleon, now master of Vienna.” It was eight days’ march from Laybach to Lintz; Prince John, therefore, might have been there by the 24th or 25th, where no one remained but Bernadotte with the Saxons. Of what incalculable importance would such a concentration of 50,000 men have been on the direct line of Napoleon’s communications immediately after his defeat at Aspern, which took place on the 22d!—See PELET, ii. 221, 222.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

high, which were filled with musketeers; and, as the assailants had only been able to bring up guns of a light calibre, they presented, when defended by brave men, very formidable obstacles. By climbing, however, to the summit of the cliffs by which they were overhung, at the same time that several regiments assailed them on the lower side, the besiegers succeeded in entirely surrounding the enemy, and exposing them to a plunging fire, to which they could make no adequate reply, from the heads only of their adversaries being seen behind the rocks. Still, however, the brave Imperialists refused to surrender: their heroic commander, Henzel, fell desperately wounded while exclaiming, "Courage, my comrades!" Rauch, who succeeded him in the command, defended himself like a lion. But nothing could in the end withstand the impetuosity of the French. Irritated by the prolonged resistance and firm countenance of the enemy, they rushed headlong against the rampart, and, crowding up on each other's shoulders, and mounting on the dead bodies which encumbered the ditch, at length succeeded in forcing their way in at the embrasures. Still the central tower, from its three stages, vomited forth a furious and incessant fire: but the external rampart being carried, its gates were at last forced; and it was only by the noble efforts of Eugene and his officers, who were penetrated with admiration at the heroic defence of their antagonists, that the lives of the few survivors of this desperate conflict were spared.¹

¹ Pel. iii. 224,
230. Erz.
Johan.
Feldz. 104,
111. Jom. iii.
228.

28.
Assault of the
Col di Tar-
wis and other
forts.

This brilliant success proved decisive of the fate of all these mountain fortifications. The Col di Tarwis, already the theatre of glorious strife in 1797, was defended by a long rampart running the whole way across the summit of the pass, from the mountain of Flitschel to that of Burqueburg, strengthened by sixteen redoubts. It was attacked at the same time as Malborghetto, and Giulay successfully defended himself for two days against very superior forces. But the fall of the forts enabled the enemy to turn this strong line, and take the defenders in rear, which Eugene was already preparing to do; so that the Archduke, on the 16th, sent orders to Giulay to evacuate his post, and effect his retreat in the night down the valley of the Saave. This order was

May 16.

promptly obeyed ; but at daylight the French discovered the evacuation, and pressed on in pursuit. They overtook the retiring Austrians in front of Weissenfels, and put them to the rout, taking eighteen guns and two thousand prisoners. Another mountain fort, on the Prediel, blocked up the road from Gorizia to Tarwis, and so arrested the march of Serras with the centre of the French army. Its garrison was only three hundred men, with eight pieces of cannon ; but they were commanded by a hero, Hermann, who had inspired his handful of followers with the resolution of the defenders of Thermopylæ. When summoned to surrender, and informed of the retreat of the Archduke, and the fall of Malborghetto, he replied, nothing daunted, that " he was resolved to lay down his life for his country."¹

Nor did his defence derogate from these heroic sentiments. Though assailed by forces twenty times as numerous as his own, he persevered in the most desperate resistance, made good the external rampart as long as a man was left upon it who could hold a bayonet ; and, when its defenders were all maimed or slain, fell back alone to the blockhouse in the centre ; and, when it was set on fire, sallied forth at the head of a band of devoted followers, and fell gloriously, pierced with innumerable wounds.* Macdonald, who with the right wing was to advance, farther to the south, across the Isonzo and the mountains of Prevald, encountered a less serious opposition. On the night of the 14th he effected the passage of the swollen torrent of the Isonzo near Gorizia, and at that place made himself master of the battering-train destined for the siege of Palma-Nuova. Two thousand men were stationed in the forts of the Prevald, constructed on the same plan as those of Malborghetto, and, like them, commanding entirely the summit of the pass. Several assaults were in the first instance repulsed by the garrison ; but when the besiegers' artillery was brought up, and the occupation of the adjacent heights exposed them without resource to a plunging fire,² against which their forti-

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

May 16.

May 17.

May 17.

¹ Pel. iii. 236,

239. Erz.

Johan.

Feldz. 120,

124.

29.

Noble defence
of Hermann,
and progress
of Macdonald.

May 14.

May 21.

² Erz. Johan,

Feldz. 120,

124. Pel. iii.

236, 239.

* The Archduke John was so impressed with the gallantry of the Austrian commander on this occasion that he wrote a letter to Hermann's father, consoling him as he best could for the loss of a heroic son.—ERZ. JOHANN'S *Feldzug*, 129.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

30.
Fall of
Trieste, Lay-
bach, and the
whole frontier
defences of
Austria.
May 22.

fications were no protection, they deemed further resistance useless, and capitulated with the whole artillery at their disposal, consisting of fifteen pieces.

Meanwhile Trieste, which was unarmed, and incapable of resistance, fell an easy prey to General Schilt, with the light troops of Macdonald's division; and the artillery taken at Gorizia and the Prevald was forthwith forwarded to that important seaport, to place it in a posture of defence against the English cruisers who were then blockading some Russian ships of war. Rapidly following up his advantages, Macdonald, immediately after making himself master of the Prevald, turned towards Laybach, where an intrenched camp, armed with fifty pieces of cannon, commanding the approach to the capital of Carniola, was garrisoned by five thousand landwehr. Joining conduct to vigour, the French general, at the same time that he approached the intrenchments with the bulk of his forces in front, detached Broussier, with two brigades, which threatened to cut off their line of retreat towards Croatia, while several squadrons on the left bank of the Saave made preparations for crossing that river, and assailing them on the other side. Alarmed at the simultaneous appearance of the enemy's forces in so many different quarters, and deeming further resistance useless, now that Vienna had surrendered, the commander of the intrenched camp laid down his arms, with nearly five thousand militia, and sixty pieces of cannon. This important success ensured the submission of all Carniola, and left Macdonald at liberty to follow the forward movement of the Viceroy towards Vienna; while the occupation of Trieste, and the passes leading to it, opened up a communication with Marmont in Dalmatia, who was already preparing to effect his junction with the Grand Army, and concur in its operations. By these successes the whole frontier fortifications of the Hereditary States were forced, with the loss to the Austrians of ten thousand men, and ninety pieces of cannon; but they were dearly purchased, for at Malborghetto, Tarwis, and Prediel, nearly half that number of French had fallen.¹

These disasters, however, considerable as they proved, were not the only, nor the greatest, which befel the

¹ Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 120,
129. Pel. iii.
236, 243.
Jom. iii. 227.
229.

retreating army. Jellachich, who had advanced towards Salzburg, in order to prepare the way for the prescribed lateral movement of the Archduke John towards Lintz, having received counter orders from that prince to descend by the valley of the Muhr towards Gratz, in order to form a junction with the bulk of the Italian army, encountered, at the bridge of St Michel, Serras with his powerful division, who, after forcing the valley of the Prevel, was descending the narrow defiles of the Muhr, on the road to Leoben. The Austrian general was following the lateral vale of Lessing, which unites at right angles with that of the Muhr at St Michel; and the two divisions came suddenly and unexpectedly in contact at that romantic pass. The Imperialists at first made a vigorous resistance, and Jellachich, arranging his troops on the road at the foot of the rocks on each side of the bridge, kept up so heavy a fire that, for two hours, all the French columns which presented themselves were swept away. Attracted to the front by the cannonade, the Viceroy came up, and immediately detached several battalions on the road to Mautern, on the other side of the Muhr, who speedily scaled the mountains in the rear of the Imperialists, and commenced a plunging fire upon them from behind. Panic-struck by this unexpected apparition, which they conceived was a second army come to complete their destruction, the Austrians broke and fled; some by the road of St Michel, where they were pursued without mercy, and for the most part either cut down or made prisoners; some by the valley of Lessing, where they fell into the hands of a French brigade, under General Valentin. Nearly two thousand Imperialists were killed or wounded, and above three thousand made prisoners in this disastrous affair: and such was the terror now inspired by the French armies, and such the depression arising from the fall of the capital, and their multiplied defeats, that on the road from Salzburg to Leoben, four hundred recruits, and twice that number of militia, laid down their arms to a captain followed by a single dragoon.¹

Jellachich, having lost all his baggage and cannon, with difficulty escaped at the head of two thousand men, by cross mountain-paths, to Gratz, where his

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

31.

Total defeat
of Jellachich
in the valley
of the Muhr.
May 24.

¹ Pel. iii.
242, 245.
Erz. Johan.
129, 135.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

32.

Eugene ad-
vances to
Vienna, and
joins Napo-
leon.
May 26
May 27.

¹ Pel. iii.
242, 247.
Erz. Johan.
Feld. 129,
137. Jom. iii.
229, 230.
Thib. vii.
266, 267.

33.

Chances of
the conflict
under the
walls of
Vienna to
either party.

arrival, and the woful condition of his troops, excited such consternation that the Archduke forthwith set out in the direction of Kormond in Hungary, abandoning all attempt to bar access to the capital to the invader. Relieved by this retreat from all further molestation in his advance, Eugene moved on rapidly in the footsteps trod twelve years before by Napoleon, to Judenberg and Leoben; and next day, amidst shouts of joy from both armies, his advanced posts fell in with the patrols of Lauriston, who belonged to the Grand Army, on the Simmering, and on the day following the junction of the two armies was fully effected; while the army of the Archduke John, driven to a circuitous and eccentric retreat into Hungary, was entirely lost for the present to the monarchy.¹

The eyes of all Europe were now fixed with absorbing interest on the shores of the Danube, near Vienna, where a hundred thousand men on either shore stood prepared for mortal, and to all appearance decisive conflict. Defeat to either party seemed fraught with irreparable ruin; for while the Austrians had no other army or reserves to fall back upon if the Archduke's army were defeated in the heart of the monarchy, the French, on their side, had a disastrous retreat to the Rhine to anticipate, if their arms should prove unsuccessful. Prussia and the North of Germany, it was well known, would start up the moment that a serious reverse befell their eagles; and though the contest took place under the walls of the Austrian capital, it was in reality one of life and death for the French empire. Nor were the chances so unequal as might at first sight appear; for though the Austrian armies had been driven back, separated from each other, and repeatedly defeated, yet their physical strength was not reduced in a much greater proportion than that of their antagonists; and though their capital was taken, still this had been accomplished only by a bold irruption which exposed the invader to nearly the same peril as the invaded. Every one felt, what Napoleon at the time admitted to be true, that a single defeat on the Danube would soon bring the Imperialists to the Rhine;* and though the Archduke Charles could not

* In the council of war held after the battle of Aspern, when some voices had

lay claim to the transcendent military talents of his opponent, yet he was second to none of the other generals of Europe in scientific ability. And it was no small military skill which, after so desperate a shock on the plains of Bavaria, could still array a hundred thousand undiscouraged warriors for the defence of their country, on the banks of the Danube.¹

During the week which immediately followed the occupation of Vienna, the Emperor, being well aware of the crisis which had arrived, was indefatigable in his efforts to station his troops in such a manner in echelon, along his line of communication, as to secure his rear from insult; while, at the same time, innumerable despatches in every direction provided for the supplies of the army. Titles, decorations, ribbons, crosses of honour, and pensions, were liberally distributed among the soldiers; splendid reviews reanimated the spirits of the men, which the fatigues of the campaign had somewhat depressed, while confident announcements in the bulletins, predicted the speedy destruction of the Austrian monarchy. He had now assembled round Vienna the whole corps of Massena and Lannes, the Imperial Guard and reserve-cavalry under Bessières; and though their strength had been much diminished by the losses of the campaign, they could still, after deducting the sick and wounded, bring above eighty thousand veteran troops into the field; Davoust at St Polten, and Bernadotte at Ebersberg and Enns, kept up his communications, while the Viceroy was daily expected with forty thousand men from Italy. Supported by the battlements of Vienna, such a force was beyond the reach of attack from any force the Imperialists could bring against them; but it was neither consistent with the Emperor's principles of war, nor political policy, to remain shut up behind walls while the enemy kept the field, and was accumulating the forces of the monarchy around him, and he resolved, therefore, to attempt by main force the passage of the river.²

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹ Pel. iii. 250.
Stat. 160,
162.

34.
Napoleon
resolves to
attack the
enemy, and
cross the
Danube.

² Jom. iii.
189, 190.
Pel. iii. 251,
255, 259.
Thib. vii. 277

been expressed for retreating, Napoleon said—"If we retreat, we shall admit in the face of all Europe that we have been defeated. Where shall we retire to? the Traun, the Inn, or the Lech? No! we must fly at once to the Rhine; for the allies whom victory or fortune has given us will all turn against our standards the moment we acknowledge a reverse."—PELET, iii. 331.

* CHAP. *
LVII.

1809.

35.

Description
of the islands
of the Danube
near Vienna,
and the differ-
ent channels
of the river.

The Danube, which, till within a few leagues of Vienna, flows in a narrow channel, there swells into a wide expanse and spreads over the plain, embracing several islands in its course. Some of these are extensive, and richly cultivated; but the greater part are smaller, and covered with wood. The island of Prater, with its beautiful umbrageous avenues and much-loved woody recesses; and that of Lobau, at a greater distance down the river, and varied with enclosures and cultivation, are the most considerable. The latter is two miles and a half in length, and a mile and three quarters in breadth, covered with rich meadows, swampy thickets, and verdant copsewoods; it has been immortalised in history from the memorable events of which it soon became the theatre. By far the most favourable point for forcing a passage from the right bank is at Nussdorf, half a league above Vienna. There the principal branch of the Danube, a hundred and eighty toises in breadth, flows in a deep and impetuous channel, separated from a similar branch, fifty toises broad, by an island which would serve as an advantageous support for assembling and putting under cover the first troops employed in the operation. Another point for attempting the same enterprise was in front of Ebersdorf, across the great island of Lobau. This island is separated from the right bank by another isle about a mile in length, and half that extent in breadth; while several smaller islets are scattered in the principal channel of the river. Thus, an army attempting the passage at that point has four branches of the Danube to cross, each of which may be considered as a separate river. There is, first, the channel separating the right bank from the lesser island, which is two hundred and forty toises broad; then the main body of the stream, flowing in a deep current, a hundred and seventy toises in breadth, which separates it from Lobau, with a small island in its course dividing this main stream into two parts; finally the northern branch which lies between the isle of Lobau and the banks of the Marchfeld on the left of the river; it is seventy toises in breadth, and in like manner broken in its course by several smaller islands. Thus, at Ebersdorf, many more bridges required to be constructed than at Nussdorf, and a military road across the islands was

¹ Personal
Observation.
Stat. 202,
210. Pel. ii.
259, 267.
Jorn. ii. 192,
194.

necessary to connect them together ; but these disadvantages were more than compensated by the diminished weight and impetuosity of the stream, in consequence of being separated into so many channels, and the solidity given to the lengthened structure, by having such considerable abutments to support it at different points.

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

After mature deliberation, Napoleon resolved to attempt the passage at the same time at both points.

Lannes was charged with the undertaking at Nussdorf ; Massena at Lobau. This double set of operations, it was hoped, would distract the attention of the enemy, and enable the Emperor to select, in the end, that one for the real passage where the least difficulties were to be overcome. Lannes, in the first instance, attempted to surprise a passage at Nussdorf, and pushed forward six hundred men to the island of Schwarze Lacken, which lies, as already mentioned, near the northern bank at that point ; but this advanced guard was speedily beset by superior forces, which General Hiller despatched from his side of the river, and before any fresh succours could arrive from the southern shore, vigorously assailed, and compelled to capitulate. This check, joined to the obvious difficulty of establishing such a force as could maintain itself in an island so near the north bank, and separated by so wide and impetuous a current from the southern, induced the Emperor to relinquish all serious intentions of effecting the passage there ; and he, in consequence, bent all his attention to the island of Lobau, where Massena was charged with the enterprise.¹

36.
Napoleon's
preparations
to effect the
passage.
Failure at
Nussdorf.
May 13.

¹ Pol. ii. 262,
265. Jom. iii.
195. Stut.
212, 216.

Indefatigable were the efforts made by all ranks, from Napoleon to the humblest soldier, for the prosecution of this great work. The inexhaustible arsenal of Vienna supplied in abundance all the stores and implements necessary for its success ; and the prudent foresight of the Emperor had already provided a flotilla of boats, drawn from many different quarters, and transported by land carriage to the Danube, which were easily converted into the materials of a bridge. Five days were consumed in these preparations ; on the sixth, every thing being in readiness, the enterprise was commenced. So anxious was the Emperor for the success of this undertaking, that he stationed himself on the southern bank as the troops

37.
His vigorous
efforts to
effect a pas-
sage at Lobau.
May 13.

May 19.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

were embarking, minutely examined and assigned to each the place he was to occupy in the vessel, superintended the distribution of cartridges to the soldiers, and addressed a few words to almost every individual man. With such secrecy had Massena's preparations been conducted, in the narrow channel of the Danube near Vienna, and behind the leafy screen of the Prater, that no danger was anticipated by the Austrians in that quarter; and although the posts in the island of Lobau were daily relieved, they had not been particularly strengthened on that occasion.¹

¹ Pel. iii. 270,
273. Stat.
222, 224.

38.
Passage of
the river.
May 19.

At ten at night on the 19th, all things being in readiness, the first boats pulled off from the shore, and, steering round the intermediate islands, made straight for that of Lobau, where the Imperialists were first apprised of their approach by their keels striking on the shore. Instantly leaping into the water, the tirailleurs rushed forward into the thickets, and being constantly fed by reinforcements from the rear, soon expelled the Austrians from the isle. Masses of infantry were immediately after passed over, who soon secured the lodgement, and rendered this important post safe from attack. At the same time, other detachments in like manner took possession of the intermediate isles; and the material points of the passage being thus secured, all hands were instantly set to the commencement of the bridges which were to connect them with the northern bank. The depth and rapidity of the current at that period, when the melting of the Alpine snows had already commenced, presented very formidable difficulties; but all were overcome by the ardour and activity of the French engineers. Sixty-eight large boats had been collected, and nine huge rafts; they made the bridge of the most solid materials as far as Lobau; but from that island to the opposite shore of the Marchfeld, it was necessary to construct it of pontoons. With such

² Pel. ii. 270,
275. Jom. iii.
196, 197.
Stat. 224,
227. Sav. iv.
63, 71, 73.

vigour, however, was the enterprise conducted, that by noon on the following day the whole was completed, and the leading columns of Massena's corps instantly began to defile over in great strength to the opposite bank.²

While this important operation was in progress in the neighbourhood of Vienna, the Archduke Charles, relying

on the prescribed co-operation of the Archduke John, with the army of Italy, through the Tyrolean mountains, had made a serious attack on the bridge of Lintz, in the upper part of the Danube. Kollowrath, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, there commenced an attack on the Wirtemburghers under Vandamme, to whom that communication was intrusted. Profiting by their superiority of force, the Imperialists in the first instance obtained considerable advantages; and that important post was on the point of falling into the hands of the enemy, when Bernadotte came up with the Saxons, nearly thirty thousand strong. The combat was no longer equal; and Kollowrath finding himself greatly outnumbered, and having received no advices of the approach of the Archduke John from the direction of Salzburg, was compelled to desist from his enterprise, and sustained a loss of several hundred men and six guns in his retreat. Two days afterwards, preparations were made for crossing the river by the Austrians at Krems, which gave serious disquiet to Napoleon, who ordered up in haste the whole corps of Davoust, which was stationed in echelon at Melk, and along the road from thence by St Polten to Vienna. May 19. But these demonstrations against his rear, so far from diverting the Emperor from his original design of crossing at Lobau, and giving battle to the Archduke on the northern bank, only made him the more intent upon the immediate prosecution of his enterprise, by showing that the enemy's army was, in part at least, removed from the scene of action, and bringing, at the same time, vividly before his mind the dangers of his situation, with a long line of communication beset by so many dangers in his rear, and the necessity of instantly bringing the war to a conclusion by a decisive victory under the walls of Vienna. He pressed the march of his troops across the bridge of Lobau with the utmost anxiety; they defiled all the 20th, and the whole of the succeeding night, without intermission; and by daybreak on the 21st, forty thousand men were already assembled in battle array on the northern side.¹

Meanwhile, the Archduke Charles, with the great body of his forces, lay on the woody heights of the Bisamberg; the fires of his bivouacs illuminated at night the whole of that quarter of the heavens; and already, by revealing

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

39.

Operations of
the Archduke
on the Upper
Danube, at
Lintz and
Krems.
May 17.

¹ Stat. 220.
224. Pel. ii.
268, 270.
Jom. iii. 197.
Sav. iv. 74.

CHAP.
LVII.1809.
40.

The Arch-
duke resolves
to attack the
French who
had crossed.

the magnitude of the enemy's force, inspired the French soldiers with gloomy presentiments as to the issue of the contest which was approaching. From this elevated position, the plain beyond Vienna towards the Simmering appeared to be enveloped in clouds of dust; but as they at intervals cleared away, the glitter of bayonets and helmets in the sun's rays, seen even at that distance, all following one direction, indicated a grand movement towards Kaiser-Ebersdorf. In effect, having perceived from that lofty ridge, by means of telescopes, both the preparations made for crossing at Lobau, and the continued march of Davoust's corps along the southern bank of the river, from Melk towards the capital, the Archduke conceived, with reason, that a favourable opportunity had now occurred of falling with his concentrated forces upon half the French army, before the remainder was crossed over, and possibly reducing it to extremities, even in sight of the other portion on the opposite bank, and while yet the columns in rear were only wending their way in toilsome march towards the capital. Impressed with these ideas, orders were sent to the advanced posts on the edge of the Marchfield towards Lobau, to fall back: after a merely nominal resistance, the cavalry, which had been all advanced to the edge of the river, were recalled; while the whole strength of the army was collected on the Bisamberg, concealed from the enemy, but ready to fall with its accumulated masses upon the first corps which should be transported across. At the same time, instructions were sent to Kollowrath, Nordman, and the officers in command farther up the river, to collect a quantity of boats to be laden with heavy materials and combustibles, and, when the proper season arrived, to be detached, so that they might be borne down by the force of the swollen current against the enemy's bridges. In truth, it was evident that Napoleon's overweening confidence in his good fortune had at last brought him into a situation full of danger, and that, with fatal rashness, he had exposed himself to the most perilous chance in war, that of being attacked by greatly superior forces in an open plain, with a great river traversed by a single bridge, recently constructed and liable to destruction, in his rear.¹

¹ Archduke Charles's Official Account of Aspern. Ann. Reg. 1809. Chron. 382, 383. Stat. 220, 229. Pel. ii. 275, 277.

Anxiety for the great events which were approaching, caused many a noble heart to throb during the night in the Austrian host; and already, as the morning dawned, thousands of aching eyes were turned in the direction of Lobau and the Marchfeld, where, even at that early hour, a great accumulation of force was visible. The march of troops across the bridge continued incessant, and all the reports from the outposts announced that the lines in their front were rapidly widening and extending. With exulting hearts the army received orders at sunrise to stand to arms: the advantages of their situation were obvious even to the meanest sentinel; the noble array which was pouring across the bridges before them, into the plains at their feet, seemed a devoted host, blindly rushing upon destruction. The vast plain of the Marchfeld, stretching from the foot of the Bisamberg to the margin of the Danube, lay spread like a carpet before the front of the line, and appeared, from the absence of every obstruction, to be the destined theatre of some great event. The officers around him urged the Archduke to commence the attack early in the morning, and while as yet the whole of Massena's corps was not passed over; but while the enemy was making a false movement was not the moment to interrupt or warn him of his danger. Instead of acceding to their suggestions, that able commander ordered the arms to be piled, and the troops to dine; following thus the maxim of the great generals of antiquity, that, even with the bravest troops, it is of the last importance to commence a battle with the strength of the men recently recruited by food. At twelve o'clock, the movement of the enemy being sufficiently pronounced, and retreat in presence of so great a host impossible, the signal to advance was given. The men received it with loud shouts and enthusiastic acclamations; joyful war-songs, accompanied by Turkish music, resounded through the air; long-continued *vivats* arose on all sides, as the Archduke Charles, the saviour of Germany, rode along the lines of the second column, at whose head he had taken his station. Every breast panting with anxious desire and deserved confidence for the decisive moment, and the finest weather favoured the awful scene. The circumstances had spread a noble

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

41.

Austrian plan
and order of
attack.
May 21.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Archduke
Charles's
Account of
Aspern, Ann.
Reg. 1809,
382. Chron.
Stut. 230,
235. Pel. ii.
275, 276.

ardour through every heart. Their much-loved capital, the abode of their Emperor, was in sight, polluted by the eagles of the stranger; their homes were the prize of victory; before them was a splendid battle-field, where they would combat for their sovereign, their liberty, and their country, under the eyes of their wives, their parents, their children. Descending from their elevated encampment, horse, foot, and cannon rapidly and eagerly pressed forward towards the enemy; and soon, to those who yet lingered on the Bisamberg, but a small space of clear green intervened between the volumes of dust which enveloped the extremity of the bridge of Lobau, and the moving clouds which marked the advance of the German host.¹

“Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval; and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length.” *

42.
Position and
dangers of
the French
army.

Midway between the villages of ASPERN and ESSLING, each situated at the distance of half a mile from the bank of the Danube, the French bridge opened upon the vast plain of the Marchfield. These villages, therefore, formed the bastions on either flank of Napoleon's army, which extended in line across the open space, a mile broad, which lay between them. Built of stone houses, most of them two stories in height, and surrounded by enclosures and garden walls of the same durable materials, both offered valuable *points d'appui* to the bridges, under cover of which, it was hoped, Massena and Bessières would be able to maintain themselves, till the remainder of the army could be brought over to their support. Essling had a large stone granary, three stories in height, furnished with loop-holes, capable of containing several hundred men; while Aspern, a long straggling village, above two miles in length, was strengthened, like Eylau, by a churchyard surrounded by a strong wall. A double line of trenches, intended to draw off the water, extended between these two natural bastions, and thence from Aspern to the Danube, and served as a wet ditch, which afforded every possible security to the troops debouching from the island of Lobau. The whole ground was per-

fectly level, gently sloping upwards, like a vast natural glacis, towards Raschdorf: white villages alone, bosomed in tufted trees, rising above the tender green of the plain, which was covered with rich crops at that early season, broke the uniformity of the expanse. Among them, on the right, the glittering pinnacles of Breitenlee, and the massy tower of Neusiedel, were conspicuous; while on the left, the woody heights of the Bisamberg shut in the scene. The wide-spread light of the bivouacs, along the broad expanse of the horizon, revealed the magnitude of the force to which they were opposed, and inspired an anxious disquietude through the French army.¹

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹ Personal Observation. Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 383. Pel. ii. 283, 287.

Uneasy at the situation of the troops which had crossed over, Napoleon was on horseback by break of day, and in person rode forward to the outposts to satisfy himself as to the amount of the enemy's force by which he was likely to be assailed. Lannes, with his usual impetuosity, maintained that there was nothing but a curtain of ten thousand men in front, and proposed that they should be attacked without delay; but Massena, instructed by long experience, and who had surveyed the fires of the enemy from the steeple of Aspern the preceding night, gave a decided opinion that the whole Austrian army was at hand. Napoleon saw too good reason to adhere to the latter view, and instantly appreciating the magnitude of the danger, rode back to the bridge to hasten the passage of the troops. Orders were despatched in every direction to assemble the forces on the right bank: the corps of Lannes was already beginning to cross over; that of Davoust, which had arrived at Vienna the evening before, was ordered up with all imaginable expedition; the cuirassiers, the Guards, the reserve cavalry, the park of artillery, all received orders to hasten to the bridges. But it was too late: their narrow breadth would only permit a very limited number of soldiers to march abreast upon them; the cavalry and artillery could only be got across with considerable difficulty; and the one over the main branch of the river was so much damaged by the rise and impetuosity of the stream, that by four o'clock in the afternoon it was almost impassable.² Meanwhile the Austrian army in great strength, eighty thousand strong, of whom fourteen thousand were magnificent cavalry,

43.
Napoleon is surprised, but resolves to give battle.

² Nap. in Month. ii. 77 Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 383, 384. Chron. Pel. ii. 283, 287. Stat. 240, 247. Jom. iii. 200

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

44.
Austrian plan
of attack, and
forces on both
sides.

with two hundred and eighty-eight pieces of cannon, was already upon them..

The Imperialists advanced in five massy columns, preceded by a strong cloud of horse, which concealed their direction and probable points of attack from the enemy.

The first, under Hiller, next the Danube, moved by the meadows on the northern bank of that river direct upon Aspern; the second, under Bellegarde, with the generalissimo by his side, advanced upon Leopoldau, and also directed its steps towards the same village; the third, led by Hohenzollern, moved by Breitenlee also upon Aspern; the fourth, commanded by Rosenberg, was to advance by Raschdorf towards Essling; the fifth, also directed by Rosenberg, was to turn the right flank of the enemy by Enzersdorf and co-operate in the attack upon Essling; the cavalry, all massed together, was to move over the open country between Raschdorf and Breitenlee, so as to assist the head of any column which might find itself assailed by the enemy's horse. No less than eleven of the Austrian batteries were of position, which, as they drew near to the enemy's lines, sent a destructive storm of round shot through their ranks. The French were far from having an equal force at their disposal, and they were particularly inferior in the number and weight of their artillery; but by two o'clock in the afternoon, when the opposing hosts came into collision, seven divisions* of native troops, besides the guards of Wirtemberg, Hesse Darmstadt, and Baden, in all fifty thousand men, were in line; and from the known character of the soldiers, as well as the firmness of their leaders, a desperate resistance was to be anticipated. Massena, with two strong divisions, was posted round Aspern; Lannes, with a third, was in Essling; the intermediate space was occupied by the remainder of Massena's corps, the Imperial Guard, and German auxiliaries, with the formidable cuirassiers of Bessières glittering in their front.¹

¹ Archduke Charles's Account of Aspern, Ann. Reg. 1809, 384, 385. Pel. ii. 201, 295. Stut. 231, 235. Jom. iii. 208.

* Viz. those of Molitor, Le Grand, Boudet, Ferrand, Nansouty, Espagne, and Lasalle. The first four were infantry, the last cavalry of the reserve and cuirassiers. Their united strength, with the German auxiliaries, must have been at least fifty thousand men, as Molitor's and Boudet's were twelve thousand each. The French, however, assert that they had only thirty thousand native troops in action on the first day.—See ARCHDUKE CHARLES'S *Official Account of the Battle of Aspern*, Ann. Reg. 384; App. to Chron. 384; and PÉLET, ii. 237.

Aspern, into which Massena had not had time to throw an adequate garrison, was in the first instance carried by the advanced guard of Hiller under Giulay. But the French marshal having quickly attacked it with the whole division of Molitor, it was not only retaken, but the Imperialists pursued to a considerable distance to the northward; till the broad and deep columns of Hiller, Bellegarde, and Hohenzollern, advancing to their support, warned the skilful French commander of the necessity of withdrawing all his troops to the defence of the village itself. The prospect which now presented itself was capable of daunting the most intrepid hearts. On the left, three broad and deep columns were seen converging towards Aspern; at a greater distance on the right, vast clouds of dust announced that other masses were threatening Essling; while along the whole front, a formidable array of artillery, vomiting forth fire and smoke, steadily advanced, rendering more awful the scene by the obscurity in which it involved all behind it. But this suspense was of short duration, and in a few minutes the Austrian battalions of Hiller, with loud shouts, advanced to the attack. If, however, the assault was impetuous, the defence was not less heroic; and never had the experienced skill and invincible tenacity of Marshal Massena been so conspicuously displayed. Stationed in the cemetery of Aspern, under the boughs of the great trees which overshadow the church, he calmly awaited the result, directing the movements of his troops, and giving his orders to support the points which most required it, with the coolness and precision of veteran courage; while the crash of the boughs above his head, and the incessant clatter of grape-shot on the steeple, told how near the enemy's batteries had approached.¹

Both parties were aware that the fate of the day mainly depended on the possession of this important point, and incredible efforts were made on either side to attain it. For several hours the murderous conflict continued; fresh troops were brought up on both parts to supply the place of those who had fallen, or were exhausted in the strife: the Austrian infantry, the Hungarian grenadiers, the volunteers of Vienna, rivalled

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

45.
Desperate
conflict at
Aspern.

¹ Stat. 230,
235. Pelet,
ii. 295, 297.
Jom. ii. 201.

46.
Which is at
length carried
by the
Austrians.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

each other in courage and perseverance in the assault, while the different divisions of Massena's corps in succession nobly sustained the defence. Every street, every house, every garden of the village, became the theatre of mortal combat: the shouts of transient success, the cries of despair, were heard alternately from both parties; an incessant shower of bombs and cannon-balls from the concentric batteries of the Imperialists spread death on all sides, alike among friend and foe; while great part of the village took fire, and the flames of the burning houses afforded, as night approached, a ghastly light wherewith to continue the work of destruction, and illuminated the whole field of battle. A desperate conflict at the same time was going on in the marshy plain between Aspern and the river, where the wet ditches leading to the Danube athwart their front, and the thickets of alder-bushes, gave the French the advantage of a natural fortification. For long the superior numbers of the Austrians impeded each other, as the position of the French centre prevented them from attacking the village on more sides than one; but at length, at eleven at night, their line having gained ground in that quarter, a combined attack was made by Hiller in front, and Vacquant, commanding part of Bellegarde's corps, which had just repulsed a formidable charge of cavalry, in flank. In spite of the most heroic efforts on the part of Massena, Molitor, and his officers, the village was carried amidst deafening shouts, which were distinctly heard above the roar of the artillery along the whole line. The French marshal made a gallant effort to regain his ground, and succeeded with Le Grand's division, which had taken the place of Molitor's in this tremendous strife, in wresting some of the houses from the enemy; but the churchyard, and the greater part of the bloodstained village, remained through the night in the hands of the Imperialists.¹

¹ Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 385, 386. Stut. 230, 239. Pel. ii. 295, 305. Jonn. iii. 201, 202.

47. Grand charge of the French cavalry in the centre. While this tremendous struggle was going on in Aspern, the central space between it and Essling was almost denuded of infantry: the numerous and formidable Austrian batteries in that quarter being chiefly guarded by cavalry, with Hohenzollern's infantry in their rear; while the splendid horsemen of the French Guard concealed on the opposite side the weakness of their infantry in the

centre of the line. So severely, however, were his troops in both villages, and even those of the most distant reserves, galled by the sustained and incessant discharge of this tremendous array of guns, that Napoleon ordered a grand charge of cavalry in his centre to wrest them from the enemy. Bessières first sent forward the light horse of the Guard: they made repeated charges; but were unable to withstand the terrible storm of grape which was vomited forth by the Austrian batteries. Upon their repulse the French marshal ordered the cuirassiers of the Guard to charge. These gallant horsemen, cased in shining armour, whose weight the English afterwards felt so severely at Waterloo, advanced at the gallop, shaking their sabres above their heads, and making the air resound with cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" So swift was the onset, so vehement the attack, that the Imperialists, who saw at once the danger of the artillery, had barely time to withdraw the guns, and throw the foot-soldiers in their rear into squares, when the tempest was upon them. In vain, however, Bessières, D'Espagne, and Lasalle, at the head of these indomitable cavaliers, swept round the now insulated foot, routed the Austrian cavalry of the reserve under Lichtenstein, which was brought up to oppose them, and enveloping the infantry formed in squares of battalions on all sides, summoned them in the pride of irresistible strength to surrender. Cut off from all other support, the brave Hungarians stood firm back to back in their squares, and kept up so vigorous and so sustained a fire on all sides, that after having half their numbers, including the gallant D'Espagne, stretched on the plain, the French cuirassiers were obliged, shattered and defeated, to retire to their own lines, and both parties at this point slept upon the field of battle.¹

Rosenberg's columns followed the course prescribed to them; but, as the fifth corps, which was to make the circuit towards Enzersdorf, and attack Essling on the extreme flank, necessarily required more time for its movement than the fourth, which advanced direct by Raschdorf upon the same point, the latter retarded their march, and the combined attack did not take place till five in the afternoon. Enzersdorf was evacuated by the

¹ Pel. ii.
298, 302.
Archduke
Charles's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 387.
Jom. iii. 20.

48.
Bloody
attack on
Essling,
which proves
unsuccessful.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

enemy upon the approach of the Imperialists ; and Lannes, at the head only of a single division, was threatened with an attack by forces more than double his own, both in front and flank. The fourth column, which attacked the village on the western side, was vigorously charged in flank in its advance by a large body of French horse, detached by Bessières from the centre of the line ; and the necessity of forming squares, to resist these attacks, retarded considerably the assault on that side. At length, however, the unsuccessful charge on the Austrian central batteries having thrown back the French cuirassiers in that quarter, and he reserve dragoons of Lichtenstein having been re-formed, and brought up in great strength to the support of the centre, the Archduke ordered a general advance of the whole line, at the same time that a combined attack of Rosenberg's two columns, now perfectly able to co-operate, was made on Essling. In spite of the utmost efforts of Napoleon, the centre of the Austrians sensibly gained ground, and it was only by the most devoted gallantry on the part of the French cuirassiers, who again and again, though with diminished numbers, renewed the combat, that he was able to prevent that part of his line from being entirely broken through. The violence of the flanking fire of grape and musketry, however, which issued from Essling, was such as to arrest the Imperialists when they came abreast of that village ; and, although many assaults were made upon it by Rosenberg's columns, and it was repeatedly set on fire by the Austrian shells, yet, such was the intrepid resistance of Lannes, with his heroic division, who defended with invincible obstinacy every house and every garden, that all the assailants could do was to drive them entirely within its walls ; and, when darkness suspended the combat, it was still in the hands of the French.¹

¹ Stat. 239, 250.
Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 388, 389. Pel. ii. 296, 299. Jom. iii. 202

49.
Feelings with which both parties passed the night on the field of battle.

The night which followed this desperate conflict was spent with very different feelings in the two armies. On both sides, indeed, the most strenuous efforts were made to repair the losses which had been sustained, and prepare for the conflict on the morrow ; but it was with very opposite emotions that the soldiers' breasts were agitated

in the two hosts. On the side of the French, to the proud confidence of victory had succeeded the chill of disappointment, the anticipation of disaster. The wonted shouts of the men were no longer heard; a dark feeling of anxiety oppressed every breast; the brilliant meteor of the empire seemed about to be extinguished in blood. They could not conceal from themselves that they had been worsted in the preceding day's fight. Aspern was lost; Essling was surrounded; the line in the centre had been forced back; the enemy slept among the dead bodies of the French; while the multitude of slain, even in the farthest reserves of their own lines, showed how completely the enemy's batteries had reached every part of their position. The Austrians, on the other hand, were justly elated by their unwonted and glorious success. For the first time, Napoleon had sustained an undoubted defeat in the field; his best troops had been baffled in a pitched battle; his position was critical beyond example, and the well-known hazard of the bridges diffused the hope that, on the morrow, a decisive victory would rescue their country from the oppressor, and at one blow work out the deliverance of Germany.¹

But though anxiety chilled the hopes, it no ways daunted the courage of the French. Stretched amidst the dead bodies of their comrades, they sternly resolved to combat to the last man on the morrow, for their beloved Emperor and the glory of their country. Sleep, induced by extraordinary fatigue, soon closed the eyes of the soldiers; the sentinels of either host were within a few yards of each other; Napoleon lay down in his cloak on the sand of the Danube, within half a mile of the Austrian batteries. But no rest was taken by the chiefs of either army; both made the most strenuous efforts to improve their chances of success for the following day. During the night, or early in the morning, the infantry of the Imperial Guard, the corps of Lannes, and the troops of Oudinot, were with much difficulty got across the bridges, so as to give Napoleon, even after all the losses of the preceding day, fully seventy thousand men in line;^{2*}

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 305,
307. Sav. iv.
75, 76. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
389.

50.
Heroic con-
stancy of the
French.

² Archduke
Charles,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 389.
Pel. ii. 308,
309. Sav. iv.
75, 76.

* These numbers are ascertained in an authentic manner. Napoleon admits that "the French army on the second day, on the two banks of the Danube, was 20,000 men superior to that of the Archduke, who had 100,000 men in the field." Davoust's corps was, at the utmost, not above 40,000 men after the

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Tacit. Hist.
v. 15.51.
Renewal of
the action on
the 22d.
Aspern and
Essling are
again obsti-
nately dis-
puted.² Archduke
Charles,
Official Ac-
count, Ann.
Reg. 1809.
339, 390.
Stat. 250,
255. Pel. ii.
310.

while Davoust, with thirty thousand more, was just commencing the passage of the bridges. The Archduke, on his side, brought up the reserve, consisting of the grenadier corps of the Prince of Reuss, from the Bisamberg to Breitenlee, a mile in the rear of the field of battle. "Ejus prælii eventus utrumque ducem, diversis animi motibus, ad maturandum summæ rei discrimen erexit. Civilis instare fortunæ; Cerialis abolere ignominiam. Germani prosperis feroces; Romanos pudor excitaverat."¹*

Short as the night was at that season on the banks of the Danube, that period of rest was not allowed to the wearied soldiers. Long before sunrise, the moment that the first gray of the summer's dawn shed a doubtful light over the field of battle, the Austrian columns of Rosenberg again assailed Essling in front and flank; and Massena, with strong reinforcements, renewed his attacks on the churchyard of Aspern. Both assaults proved successful. Essling for the first time was carried by the Archduke's regiment of grenadiers in the early twilight, and the Imperialists, following up their success, forced the French lines on their left back towards the Danube, and straitened them considerably in that quarter. But this important success was counterbalanced by the loss of Aspern, which at the same moment was taken, with the battalion in the churchyard, and four pieces of cannon, by the French division of Cara St Cyr. Both parties made the utmost efforts to retrieve these momentous losses. St Hilaire came up with his division of Lannes' corps to the assistance of that gallant marshal, who was now driven out of all parts of Essling except the great granary, and by a sudden effort expelled the Austrians, who were never able again to recover their footing in that important village till the very conclusion of the battle, though the most desperate conflict, both of foot and horse, went on the whole day in its immediate neighbourhood.²

The regiment of Klebeck rushed, about the same time,

losses it had undergone: at this rate, therefore, the French army, which was all across excepting that marshal's corps, would have been 80,000; and, deducting 10,000 for the losses of the preceding day, 70,000 must have remained on the field on the 22d.—See NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON, ii. 78.

* "The result of this day's action stimulated both generals, from different motives, to hasten the final issue of the struggle. Civilis, to follow up his good fortune: Cerialis, to wipe out his disgrace. The Germans elated by their success, the Romans roused by shame."—TACITUS, *History*, v. 15.

with fixed bayonets into the burning ruins of Aspern ; the French under Cara St Cyr were expelled by the violence of the shock ; but they returned to the charge reinforced by several battalions of the Imperial Guard, and after a struggle of an hour's duration, again drove out the Imperialists, and got possession of the churchyard, which by this time was literally covered with the dead. Hiller, however, was not to be outdone in this tremendous struggle. Again forming a column of attack, in conjunction with part of Bellegerde's corps, he himself led on the charge at the head of the regiment Benjossky. Trampling under foot the dead and the dying, these heroic assailants advanced through burning houses and a storm of shot, and by great exertions succeeded in driving the French entirely out of the village. The Austrian commander instantly ordered the pioneers to pull down the walls of the churchyard, and burn the church and parsonage-house, so as to prevent these important points from being again rendered a shelter to the enemy. Some additional regiments were soon after brought up under General Bianchi, which enabled the Imperialists not only to maintain themselves till the close of the battle in this obstinately contested village, but to advance in the evening somewhat beyond its limits, and direct the fire of their artillery upon the flank of the French lines, drawn up between it and Essling, which played till nightfall with tremendous effect upon the dense masses, who were there accumulated within a space of little more than a mile in extent.¹

These bloody contests in the villages were not such as by any means suited the ardent and impetuous mind of Napoleon. Relieved from the necessity of remaining on the defensive, by the important accessions of force which he had obtained during the night, he was preparing a grand attack in the centre. For this purpose, instructions were sent to Massena, who had not yet been expelled from Aspern, to maintain himself in that village ; Davoust was to debouch from the bridges, in the direction of Essling ; while Oudinot and Lannes, supported by the infantry and cavalry of the Guard, were to make a united attack on the Archduke's centre, which it was hoped might be thus driven back, and entirely separated

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

52.

Aspern is
finally carried
by the
Austrians.

¹ Archduke's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 390.
391. Chron.
Stat. 250,
261. Jom.
iii. 203, 204.
Pel. ii. 310,
311. Nap. in
Month. ii. 78,
79.

53.
Napoleon
makes a
grand attack
on the
Austrian
centre.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

from the wings engaged in the combats round the villages. From his station behind the centre of the French line, Napoleon, at seven in the morning, pointed out with his finger to Lannes, who was on horseback beside him, the direction which his corps should follow in their advance, which was where the Austrian line appeared weakest, between the left of Hohenzollern and the right of Rosenberg. The Emperor soon after rode through the lines of the troops who were to advance, and was received with enthusiastic shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur !*" Attracted by the sound, the enemy's cannon directed their fire in that direction, though the fog which still lingered on the banks of the Danube concealed him from their sight, and General Monthion was killed by his side.¹

¹ Sav. iv. 74,
75. Pel. ii.
310, 310, 312,
Jom. iii. 204.
Stat. 249,
252.

54.
Which is at
first success-
ful.

Instantly the necessary orders were given, and in a few minutes the whole of Lannes' corps were thrown into open column, which advanced at a rapid pace, the right in front, the cavalry in reserve, immediately behind the infantry; while two hundred pieces of cannon, arrayed in the front of the whole line, distracted the attention of the enemy by a fire of unprecedented severity. As soon as Lannes, on the right, had made some progress, the remainder of the French centre, to the left, also advanced: Oudinot's troops formed the first columns, with the cuirassiers immediately behind them, and the Imperial Guard in reserve; so that the whole French line between Essling and Aspern moved forward in echelon, the right in front, and preceded by a tremendous array of artillery. The shock was irresistible: the heads of Lannes' columns, skilfully directed against the weakest part of the Austrian line, soon forced their way through, and threw some battalions into disorder; into the opening thus formed the cavalry rushed with appalling fury, and soon a huge gap appeared between Rosenberg and Hohenzollern, and the foremost of the squadrons penetrated even to Breitenlee, where the Austrian reserve of the Prince of Reuss was stationed, while the fugitives from the broken battalions spread in all directions the report that the battle was lost.²

² Pel. ii.
310, 316.
Jom. iii. 204.
Stat. 241, 250.
Archduke
Charles's
Account of
Aspern,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 391,
392. App. to
Chron. Sav.
iv. 75. Nap.
in Month. ii.
78, 80.

The Archduke now felt that the decisive moment had arrived: the battle, the monarchy were at stake. In this

extremity that gallant prince displayed alike the skill of a consummate commander, and the heroism of a common soldier. The reserve grenadiers under the Prince of Reuss were hastily thrown into square, and brought up to the menaced point; the numerous dragoons of Prince Liechtenstein advanced immediately behind them; and the Archduke himself, seizing the standard of Zach's corps, which had begun to give way, addressed a few energetic words to the men, and led them back against the enemy. The generals around him emulated the noble example; but most of them were killed or wounded at this dreadful moment. General Colloredo received a ball in the head, close by the Archduke's side, and the diminished numbers of his personal staff showed how desperate was the strife in which the generalissimo was engaged. But these heroic efforts restored the battle. Reanimated by the heart-stirring example of their chiefs, the soldiers stood their ground; the dreadful column of Lannes was arrested in its advance, and the squares among which it had penetrated, pouring in destructive volleys on all sides, soon occasioned hesitation and anxiety in the dense array. The Austrian batteries, playing at half musket-shot, occasioned a frightful carnage in the deep masses of Napoleon's troops, which, unable either to deploy under so terrific a fire, or return it to advantage from the edges only of their columns, were swept away without the power of making any serious resistance. From the moment that the irruption of Lannes' column was stopped, and the regiments behind were compelled to halt, the French soldiers felt that the day was lost.* In vain the cuirassiers were brought forward, who dashed, as at Waterloo, through the intervals of the squares; in vain those brave horsemen

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

55.
Desperate
resistance of
the Austrian
centre.

* "We persisted," says Savary, an eyewitness, "in penetrating into the checker of squares which formed the enemy's line, when the extreme severity of the fire of grape and musketry obliged us to halt, and begin exchanging volleys with our antagonists under very disadvantageous circumstances. Every quarter of an hour which we passed in that position rendered our disadvantage greater. Our troops were all in mass or column, and could not deploy to return the fire with which they were assailed. From that moment it was easy to foresee, not only that the day could not have a favourable issue, but even that it would probably terminate in some disaster. They tried in vain to restore these disadvantages by charges of cuirassiers, which took place in several directions, but they had hardly pierced through the openings of the enemy's squares, when they were assailed by the Austrian horse, three times more numerous, and driven back upon our infantry." This was *before* the breaking down of the bridges, which is afterwards mentioned by the Duke of Rovigo.—See SAVARY, iv. 77.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Sav. iv. 77.
Stat. 249,
251. Pel. ii.
318, 320.

rode round the steady battalions, and charged them repeatedly to the bayonets' points. Not one square was broken, not one column gave way; and the horsemen, grievously shattered by the terrible fire, were soon after charged by the enemy's reserve cavalry, under Lichtenstein, who came up with loud shouts from the rear, and driven back in disorder upon their own infantry.¹

56.
Success of
Hohenzollern,
and
rupture of the
bridges.

At this critical moment, Hohenzollern, perceiving a considerable opening on the right of the French line, occasioned by the unequal advance of some of their regiments, seized the favourable opportunity to dash in with Tro-luk's regiment, and occupy the space: it sustained itself there against all the attacks of the enemy, till the Archduke, who at once saw the importance of this movement, supported that gallant corps, when almost overwhelmed by fatigue and numbers, by six regiments of Hungarian grenadiers. These fresh troops pressed forward, intersecting the whole French line, and overthrowing every thing which opposed them: they even reached the batteries in the rear near Essling, where they were assailed by such a destructive fire from that village, that nothing but the presence of the Archduke, who hastened to the spot, enabled them to maintain their ground. At the same time, the want of ammunition began to be sensibly felt in the French army, especially by the artillery, the supplies of which were nearly exhausted by the incessant firing of the two days; and accounts began to circulate, and soon spread like wildfire through the ranks, that the bridges were broken down, and all communication with the reserve posts, and two-thirds of Davoust's corps, still on the southern bank, cut off. In effect, at half-past eight, the alarming intelligence reached the Emperor that the fire-ships and heavy barks laden with stones, sent down the river by the Archduke, had, with the swelling of the river, produced the desired effect, and that a considerable part of the bridge over the main stream of the Danube had been swept away.²

² Sav. iv. 77.
Stat. 251,
255. Jom.
iii. 205, 206.
Pel. ii. 318,
320. Arch.
Charles's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 391,
292.

57.
The French
retire towards
the island of
Lobau.

In this terrible moment Napoleon's courage did not forsake him. Grave and thoughtful, but collected, he allayed by the calmness of his manner the alarm of those around him, and immediately gave the necessary orders to suspend the attack at all points, and fall back towards the

island of Lobau Before they could reach the columns in front, however, the advance of these was already arrested by the violence of the enemy's fire, and several battalions, melting away under the destructive storm, had begun to recede, or stood in a state of hesitation, unable to go on, unwilling to retire. The Austrians, perceiving those symptoms of vacillation, resumed the offensive at all points, and, forming two fresh columns of attack under Dedowich and Hohenlohe, made a sudden assault on Essling, which was carried, with the exception of the great granary, at the very moment that the French centre, slowly retiring, re-entered the narrow plain between that village and Aspern, from which they had issued in all the confidence of victory in the morning. This important success rendered the situation of Napoleon wellnigh desperate, and disorder was rapidly spreading through the ranks; for Aspern, in spite of the most heroic efforts of Massena and Le Grand, was in great part already lost, and the capture of the second village precluded almost entirely the possibility of a retreat to the river side.

He made the utmost exertions, therefore, to regain it, and General Mouton, at the head of a brigade of the Imperial Guard, being intrusted with the attack, advanced in double-quick time, and drove out the enemy at the point of the bayonet. Again the Austrians returned, and pushing up to the very foot of the granary, fired, and thrust their bayonets into the loopholes from which the deadly fire issued which thinned their ranks. In the tumult, the upper part of the building took fire, but still the invincible French soldiers maintained themselves in the lower stories; amidst the roar of musketry and the crash of burning rafters. Five times did the Hungarian grenadiers rush up to the flaming walls, and five times were they repulsed by the unconquerable firmness of the Old Guard. At length Rosenberg, finding that the enemy was resolved to maintain himself in that post at all hazards, and that the combat there was constantly fed by fresh reinforcements of the flower of the French army, drew off his troops; and, desisting from all further attack on the village, confined himself to an incessant fire of grape and round shot upon the French columns,² which, now in full retreat, were massed together in such extra-

CHAP.

LVII.

1809.

¹ Nap. in Month. ii. 77, 79. Sav. iv. 78. Pel. ii. 325, 327.

58.
Invincible defence of Essling by the Imperial Guard.

² Nap. in Month. ii. 77, 79. Sav. iv. 78, 79. Pel. ii. 318, 325, 326. Stat. 260, 268. Archduke Charles, Ann. Reg. 1809, 392, 393.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

59.
Last attack
of the Aus-
trians, and
fall of Mar-
shal Lannes.

ordinary numbers at the entrance of the bridges leading to Lobau, that every shot told with fatal effect on men or horses.

Anxious to crown his glorious efforts by a decisive attack, the Archduke now brought forward his last reserves of Hungarian grenadiers, and, putting himself at their head, advanced with an intrepid step against the retreating French columns, while the whole artillery, rapidly advancing in front and rear, contracting into a semicircle round the diminished host, kept up an incessant and destructive fire. The most vivid disquietude seized the French generals when they beheld their wearied bands assailed by fresh troops, which seemed to have sprung up from the earth at the conclusion of this fight of giants. But Lannes arranged his best men in the rear of the columns, and, supporting them by the infantry and cuirassiers whom Napoleon sent up to his assistance, prepared to resist the attack; while Massena, on his side, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, with his sword in his hand and resolution in his countenance, seemed to multiply as necessity required his presence. Reserving their fire to the last moment, the French veterans, when the Hungarians were within pistol-shot, poured in so close and destructive a volley, that the advance of the enemy was checked, and a close combat with fire-arms commenced. At that moment, Lannes, who had dismounted from his horse to avoid the dreadful fire of the artillery, which swept off every thing above the heads of the soldiers, was struck by a cannon-ball, which carried away both his legs. As Napoleon was engaged in the island of Lobau in directing the position of some batteries to protect the passage into that island from the field of battle, he saw a litter approaching, on which, when it came up, he beheld the heroic marshal, his early companion in arms in Italy, extended in the agonies of death.¹

¹ Stat. 272,
280. Sav. iv.
79, 80. Nap.
in Month. ii.
78, 79.

60.
His death.

Lannes seized his hand, and said, with a voice tremulous from loss of blood—"Adieu, Sire! Live for the world; but bestow a few thoughts on one of your best friends, who in a few hours will be no more." On his knees, beside the rude couch of the dying hero, Napoleon wept: "Lannes, do you not know me? It is the Emperor—

it is Buonaparte, your friend—you will yet be preserved to us.” “I would wish to live,” replied Lannes, “to serve you and my country; but in an hour I shall be no more.” Napoleon was deeply affected; he had never before evinced such emotion. “Nothing,” said he to Massena, “but so terrible a stroke could have withdrawn me for a moment from the care of the army.” Shortly after, Lannes was relieved from his sufferings by a faint, which, after some days, terminated in death. St Hilaire, at the same time, was brought in mortally wounded.* It was time that this terrible carnage should cease: the generals and superior officers were in great part struck down; the artillery horses were almost all killed, and the guns being drawn by the foot-soldiers; the infantry and cannon had exhausted almost all their ammunition; the cavalry had already all retired into the island of Lobau; but still the rear-guard, with unconquerable resolution, maintained the combat. The Austrians were nearly as much exhausted as their opponents; and, desisting from all further attacks, maintained only a tremendous fire from all the batteries till midnight, when, the last of the enemy having withdrawn from the field of battle into the island, exhausted by fatigue, the artillerymen sank into sleep beside their guns.¹

1 Pel. ii. 326,
327, 338.
Sav. iv. 79,
80. Thib. vii.
289, 290.
Stat. 272,
281. Nap. in
Month. ii. 78,
79.

Such was the famous battle of Aspern, the most glorious in the Austrian annals—for ever memorable in the annals of military fame. It was the first great action in which Napoleon had been defeated; for at Eylau, though, as the event ultimately proved, he had been worsted, yet, in the first instance, he remained master of the field of battle. The loss on both sides was enormous; but that of the

61.
Results of the
battle, and
loss on both
sides.

* These officers were among the most esteemed of all Napoleon's generals:—"Lannes," said he, "was wise, prudent, and withal audacious, gifted with imperturbable *sang-froid* in presence of the enemy. He had received little education; all his qualities were derived from nature." Napoleon, who witnessed from his outset in the Italian campaigns the extension of his understanding, often remarked it with surprise. He was superior to all the French generals on the field of battle, in directing the movements of twenty-five thousand infantry. He was still young when he had thus risen to perfection; perhaps he would have ultimately risen to the same eminence in strategy, which he did not as yet comprehend. St Hilaire was remarkable ever since the battle of Castiglione in 1796, by his chivalrous character; he was a good brother and parent, and was devoted to the Emperor ever since the siege of Toulon. He was called, in the army, the chevalier without fear and without reproach. Napoleon shed bitter tears at his death and that of Lannes. They would not have been wanting in constancy in misfortune, nor have been faithful to the glory of France."—*NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON*, ii. 83, 84.

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

French was much greater than that of their opponents, owing to their decided inferiority in numbers, and especially in artillery, on the first day, and the tremendous effect of the concentric fire of three hundred pieces of cannon on the second, upon the dense columns of attack, which the narrow extent of the ground, the awful cannonade, and obstinate resistance of the Imperial squares, prevented from deploying into line. Eighty-seven superior officers and four thousand two hundred privates were killed, besides sixteen thousand three hundred wounded, on the side of the Imperialists: a loss which, however great, the Archduke, with true German honesty, had the magnanimity at once to admit in his official account of the battle. The French lost above thirty thousand men, of whom seven thousand were buried by the Austrians on the field; a few guns and some hundred unhurt prisoners were taken on both sides: five thousand wounded fell into the hands of the Imperialists. For several days after the battle, the Austrians were constantly occupied in burying the dead; innumerable corpses were found in the smaller channels of the Danube; the waters even of that mighty stream were for some days poisoned by the multitude of slain which encumbered its banks, and a pestilential air was wafted down the theatre of death.^{1*}

Driven back with all his army into an island in the Danube, after sustaining this frightful loss, the French Emperor, at ten at night, hastily called a council of war on the margin of the river. Seated under a tree which overhung the stream, Napoleon beheld the great bridge in the central channel entirely swept away, and the lesser

¹ Archduke Charles's Official Account, Ann. Reg. 1809. Chron. 394. Pel. ii. 358. Thib. vii. 295.

* The tenth bulletin acknowledged a loss of fifteen hundred killed and three thousand wounded: a list of casualties so obviously disproportioned to the magnitude and obstinacy of the conflict as to excite the ridicule of all Europe. Subsequently Napoleon admitted he had four thousand killed, which would imply a total loss of above twenty thousand. The Austrian official account, which derives credit from the candour with which it admitted their own casualties, estimates the French loss at thirty-six thousand, on the authentic grounds that seven thousand French were buried on the field of battle, and twenty-nine thousand seven hundred and seventy-three wounded were carried to the hospitals at Vienna. The experience of the British in the Peninsular War, especially at Talavera and Albuera, warrants the assertion that two armies of from sixty thousand to eighty thousand on each side could not combat in so obstinate a manner for two days under the fire of five hundred pieces of cannon, all crossing each other, without a loss of above twenty thousand to the victorious and superior, and thirty thousand to the vanquished and weaker party.—See *Tenth Bulletin, Monitor*, June 6, 1809; ARCHDUKE CHARLES'S *Official Account*, Ann. Reg. 1809, 394; *App. to Chronicle*; THIBAU-DEAU, vii. 295.

one of pontoons to the intermediate island of Reduit also in ruins. Retreat to the southern bank from the island of Lobau was evidently impossible; for the Danube, which had risen fourteen feet during the three preceding days, from the melting of the snows in the Alps of the Tyrol, was rolling impetuously in a raging flood, which had carried down every boat in the main channel, overflowed the whole low grounds in the island, and rendered even the narrow branch which separated them from the March-field, usually only a few feet deep, a rapid and dangerous torrent. Never was an army assembled under more disastrous circumstances than the French on that memorable night. To the deep roar of artillery, the shouts of the combatants, and the incessant clang of musketry, had succeeded a silence yet more awful, interrupted only by the challenges of the sentinels, as they paced their melancholy rounds, or the groans of the wounded, who, without covering or shelter of any kind, lay scattered on the humid surface. Above twenty thousand brave men were there, weltering in their blood, or murmuring in their last moments a prayer for their mothers, their children, their country. Gloom had seized on every mind, despair had penetrated the bravest hearts. It was universally known that the artillery ammunition was exhausted, and the communication with the southern bank cut off; and it was difficult to see how an attack from the enemy, on the succeeding day, could be resisted with any prospect of success. Nearly half the combatants had fallen: every one, even though unhurt himself, had to deplore the death of a friend, a comrade, a benefactor. Provisions there were none in the island; succour for the wounded, burial for the dead, were alike beyond the strength of the wearied survivors. A few were still buoyant with hope: and, protesting they had not been defeated, vociferously demanded a renewal of the combat on the morrow; but the great majority in gloomy silence mused upon their fate, and not a few openly murmured against the chief, whose imprudence and obstinacy had brought them into a situation where victory was hopeless and retreat impossible.¹

The influence of these gloomy feelings strongly appeared in the opinions of the chiefs who attended Napoleon at

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

62.

Deplorable
situation of
the French
army in the
island of
Lobau, on
the night of
the 22d.

¹ Sav. ii. 81.
Pel. ii. 337,
339

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

63.

Council of
war in the
island of
Lobau, in
which it is
resolved by
Napoleon to
maintain
himself in
that island.

his council of war on the shores of the Island of Lobau. The bravest marshals of the army, Massena, Davoust, Berthier, Oudinot, were there; but they unanimously and strongly expressed the opinion that it was necessary to retire entirely to the right bank of the river. Napoleon heard them all, and then observed: "But, gentlemen, when you advise me to withdraw across the river, it is the same thing as desiring me to retreat to Strasburg. We can no longer cross except in boats; and that is equivalent to saying, it is nearly impracticable, and could not be effected without abandoning the wounded, the artillery, the horses, which would entirely disorganise the army. Shall we abandon the wounded? Shall twenty thousand brave men add to the trophies of the enemy? Shall we thus openly proclaim, in the face of Europe, that we have been vanquished? If we re-pass the Danube, the enemy will instantly do the same, and then we shall never find rest till we are under the cannon of Strasburg. Is it on the Traun, the Inn, or the Lech, that we can make a stand? No; we shall speedily be driven behind the Rhine; and all the allies whom victory has given us, will at once pass over to the enemy. Shall we add to the losses of these two days that of the men who are now dispersed among the woods of these islands? If I retire to Vienna, the Archduke will pass the Danube at Lintz, and I shall be under the necessity of marching to meet him, and sacrificing twenty thousand more in the hospitals, one half of whom, if I remain here, will rejoin their standards in a month. In a few days Eugene will descend from the Alps of Styria; the half of Lefebvre's corps will be disposable from the Tyrol; and even if the enemy, by passing at Lintz, should menace our existing line of retreat, we shall have a clear route open into Italy, where, with eight corps assembled,* we shall speedily regain our ascendancy. We must therefore remain at Lobau: you, Massena, will complete what you have so gloriously begun; you alone can restrain the Archduke, and prevent his advancing, during the few days which are necessary to re-establish our communications."¹

¹ Sav. iv. 81,
82. Pel. ii.
330, 333.

* Viz. those of Eugene, Marmont, Macdonald, Lefebvre, Bernadotte, Davoust, Oudinot, Massena, besides the Guard and reserve; in all, notwithstanding their losses, a hundred and forty thousand men.—JOMINI, iii. 213.

The marshals, struck by the justice as well as fortitude of these remarks, all assented to the Emperor's opinions; and it was resolved to defend the isle of Lobau to the last extremity. The whole engineers and sappers in the island were immediately embarked for the right bank; and at midnight the Emperor committed himself to a frail bark with Berthier and Savary, and was ferried across the roaring flood to Ebersdorf. He leaned on Savary's arm in passing from the bark to the village; but though his mind laboured, he was not agitated. Exhausted by fatigue, he threw himself on some straw, and took a few hours' sleep; but shortly after daybreak he was again on horseback, actively organising the transmission of provisions to the troops in the island, and preparing the means of re-establishing the bridges.¹*

The conduct of Napoleon in provoking an engagement with inferior forces in so hazardous a situation as the Marchfeld, with a single and insecure bridge in his rear, has been the subject of keen discussion by the French military writers; and three of the most distinguished of them have undertaken its defence, and pleaded it with all their wonted ability.² But there are some questions so plain, that in discussing them the strength of a child is equal to that of a giant; and, if Napoleon, Cæsar, and Hannibal, were to concur in justifying that extraordinary step, they would fail in producing any impression upon the common sense of mankind. The military is not, any more than politics, at least in its leading prin-

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

64.

And the position there is accordingly maintained, and Napoleon retires to Vienna.

1 Sav. iv. 81,
83. Pel. ii.
330, 333.
Jom. iii. 213.

65.

Reflections on the conduct of Napoleon in the battle of Aspern.

2 See Nap. in Month. ii. 71, 83. Pictet, ii. 358, 364. Jom. iii. 217, 220.

* Several writers, and in particular one celebrated historian, whose temper and judgment are not equal to his talent, (MONTGAILLARD, vi. 405.) have represented the early retreat of Napoleon from the field of battle in the evening of the 22d, into the island of Lobau, and thence at midnight across the main stream to Vienna, as a pusillanimous desertion of his troops, which brings both his courage and capacity seriously into question. There does not seem to be any ground for this opinion. Chiefs were not wanting to the French Emperor, who would, with the utmost gallantry, head and stimulate the charges of the troops; but his own proper sphere of action was different, and one mind only could sustain the weight of the direction of a hundred and fifty thousand men. Had Napoleon fallen at the head of his Guards on the Marchfeld, no other moral courage would have been equal to sustaining the conflict; the army would have retreated to the Rhine, and the mighty fabric of the empire had been dissolved in a moment. The time had not yet arrived when it was the duty of its chief to conquer or die. The case was different with the Archduke Charles; when he put himself at the head of the regiment of Zach, and, with the standard in his hand, threw himself on the enemy, the last hour of the Austrian monarchy appeared to be near at hand; the conflict was that of Napoleon on the heights of Montmartre: vain would be all the skill of the generallissimo, unless, in that decisive moment, the bravery of the colonel repaired the disorder, and arrested the dreadful irruption of Laannes' columns.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

1 9th Book
Nap. 207.66.
His military
errors and
rashness on
this occasion.

ciple, an abstruse art ; whatever directs the proceedings of large masses of mankind must be founded on maxims obvious to every capacity. Napoleon himself has told us that the leading object in strategy is, with a force inferior upon the whole, to be always superior at the point of attack ; and that the greatest fault a commander can commit is to fight with no other line of retreat than by a narrow defile. His main charge against the generalship of Wellington, is founded upon the fact of his having fought at Waterloo with a single highway traversing the forest of Soignies in his rear. "The position of Mount St John," said Napoleon, "was *ill-chosen. The first requisite of a field of battle is to have no defiles in its rear.* The injudicious choice of the field of battle rendered to the English army all retreat impossible."¹

Judging by these principles, which are recommended not less by the weight of his authority than by their intrinsic justice and sense, what are we to say to the general who, though superior by twenty thousand men upon the whole to his adversary, on the first day, according to his own account of the matter, exposed twenty-five thousand men* to a hopeless contest with eighty thousand ; and, on the second, precipitated seventy thousand, in close columns, against a semicircle of batteries containing three hundred guns, every shot from which fell with the certainty of destruction upon their crowded ranks, and that, too, when a vast river, traversed only by a tottering bridge, connected the troops in advance with the reserve of the army, and served as the only possible way of retreat to either in case of disaster ? It is in vain that his defenders argue that eight divisions on the field of battle, with four under

* "On the two banks of the Danube," says Napoleon, "I had, at the time of the battle of Aspern, twenty thousand men more than the Archduke. In the battle of the 21st, twenty-five thousand men combated a hundred thousand during three hours and a half, and preserved their positions."—*NAPOLEON IN MONTEBELLUNA*, ii. 78, *Mémoires*. These numbers are grossly exaggerated, according to his usual practice ; but the greater the disproportion is made, the worse for Napoleon ; for how did a general, at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand men, come to expose twenty-five thousand to so grievous a chance as combating against such odds, with a river all but impassable in their rear ? There are occasions in war when such a risk as this must be incurred, and when to hazard it is the first duty of a commander. Such was Wellington's situation on the Douro in 1809, and Napoleon's own at Lodi in 1796, and in Champagne in 1814. But in 1809 he lay under no such necessity ; the capital, the resources, the arsenals of Austria were in his power ; the great stroke which was to fascinate mankind had been struck ; it was the Archduke who was in the predicament of being compelled to undertake perilous measures.

Davoust on the right bank, were equal to any force the Austrians could bring against them. Granted, provided always the communication between them was secure : but what is to be said to hazarding two-thirds of the army on the left bank, when a narrow bridge, a mile in length, shaking under the flood, separated that portion from the remaining third on the other bank ? Napoleon has himself told us that "*twice*, on the 21st, the bridges were carried away by the flood, and that the Austrian boats were already dashing against the pontoons. At midnight the Danube rose in the most frightful manner, and the passage was a third time interrupted, and not restored till next morning, when the Guard and Oudinot's corps commenced their passage."¹ What temerity, then, in such circumstances, to hazard a decisive action on the day following with the whole Austrian army, and precipitate Lannes into the centre of their batteries, early in the morning, before either the bulk of Davoust's corps or the reserve parks of ammunition had crossed the perilous passage !

¹ Nap. in Month, ii. 77.

Nor is this all ; the result of the battle of Aspern clearly demonstrates, that the method of attacking in column in a narrow field, and against a brave enemy, is essentially defective ; and that the prodigious loss sustained by Napoleon was owing to his persisting in it under circumstances where it had obviously become inexpedient. The observations of a distinguished French military writer on this subject are convincing and unanswerable. "The battle of Essling was lost," says General Rogniat, "in consequence of our having attacked in *column* the centre of the Austrian line. That centre skilfully gave ground as the French columns of Lannes and Oudinot advanced, while their wings insensibly approached our flanks. By means of that skilful manœuvre we soon found ourselves in the centre of a semicircle of artillery and musketry, the whole fire of which converged on our unhappy columns. Cannon-balls, musket-shots, shells, grape, bombs, crossed each other in every line over our heads, and fell on our ranks like a hail-storm. Every thing was struck down or overturned, and our leading columns were literally destroyed :² in the end we were obliged to fall back and yield to that frightful tempest, till we again came abreast

67.
Observations on the French method of attacking in column.

² Rogniat sur l'Art Militaire, 333.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Polyb. iii.
c. 12. Liv.
xxii. 47.

68.
Disadvan-
tages of the
attack in
column when
steadily re-
sisted.

² Jom. Vie
de Nap. iii.
201.

of Aspern and Essling, the bulwarks of our wings." It was by a system of tactics precisely similar that Hannibal crushed the Roman centre, and gained the battle of Cannæ. "*Cuneus Gallorum ut pulsus æquavit frontem primum, deinde nitendo etiam sinum in medio dedit, Afri circa jam cornua fecerant, irruentibusque incaute in medium Romanis, circumdedere alas. Mox cornua extendendo, clausere et ab tergo hostes.*"¹ * The military art is in its fundamental principles the same in all ages; and it is highly interesting to see Hannibal's triumph, and Napoleon's defeat, arise, under the greatest possible difference of ground, arms, and contending nations, from the same simple and obvious cause.†

The Austrians, indeed, had not yet attained to the incomparable discipline and firmness which enabled Wellington with British troops so often to repel with prodigious slaughter the French attack in column by a single line, three or four deep. But they did on this occasion, as well as long at Wagram, successfully resist it by receiving the column in a checker of battalions in column; a disposition extremely similar to that adopted by the British commander at Waterloo, and which the Archduke then adopted for the first time, after having read a few weeks before the chapter on the principles of war, by General Jomini, where it was strenuously recommended.²‡ The dreadful carnage sustained by the French troops in subsequent battles, especially at Albuera, Borodino, and Waterloo, was mainly owing to the same cause. Doubtless, the attack in column is most formidable, and

* "The wedge of the Gauls being repulsed in the first instance, retired to their original ground; then fell gradually back, and made a curve in the centre of the line. The Africans assembled on the wings; and, as the Romans incautiously advanced into the heart of the battle, fell on their flanks. Soon, extending their wings, they shut them in even in rear also."—LIVY, xxii. 47.

† Napoleon saw these principles clearly, when judging of the conduct of other generals:—"Sempronius," says he, "was conquered at the Trebbia and Varro at Cannæ, though they commanded armies more numerous than Hannibal's, because, in conformity with the Roman practice, they arranged their troops in a column of three lines, while Hannibal drew up his in a single line. The Carthaginian cavalry was superior in number and quality; the Roman legions were attacked in front, flank, and rear, and in consequence defeated. If the two consuls had adopted an order of battle more conformable to circumstances, they would probably have conquered." What a luminous commentary on his own conduct and defeat at Aspern!—See NAPOLEON in MONTH. i. 282, *Mélanges*.

‡ Each battalion was drawn up in column by divisions; and as each division consisted of two platoons or companies, this was in fact forming them in column of attack on the centre companies. And the battalion, consisting of six companies, or three divisions, was thus drawn up in three lines.

it requires great firmness in a single line to resist a mass to which weight and numbers have given so much momentum. But its success depends entirely on the courage of the leading and flanking files; its ranks, massed together, present an unerring mark for the enemy's fire, if they will only stand to deliver it; confusion is apt to arise in the centre from the losses sustained or witnessed by men not warmed by the heat of action, and if it is exposed to a concentric discharge, or meets with opponents as resolute as itself, it becomes liable to a bloody reverse. The same principle applies to breaking the line at sea: that system has done admirably with the French and Spaniards; but let the British admirals consider well before they adopt it in combating the Russians or Americans.

In truth, nothing can be more apparent than that, considered merely in a military point of view, the conduct of Napoleon, in regard to the battle of Aspern, was altogether inexcusable, and that it was the peculiarity and hazard of his political situation which made him persist in so perilous an undertaking. He has told us so himself: "At Aspern, at Jena, at Austerlitz, where I have been accused of acting rashly, I had no option: I was placed in the alternative of victory or ruin."¹ He felt that his situation, as head of a military republic, required continual excitement for its maintenance; that he must fascinate the minds of men by rapid and dazzling successes; and that the first pause in the career of victory was the commencement of ruin. Though in possession of the Austrian capital, military resources, and finest provinces, he still felt that the contest must not be protracted, and that to keep up his character for invincibility, he must cross the Danube, and finish the war by a clap of thunder. Undue contempt for the Austrian troops, or ignorance of the magnitude of the host which they had at hand, led him to hazard the engagement of the 21st, with a most unequal force; and having once engaged, however imprudently, in the contest, he conceived that he must at all hazards carry it on, and, despite of his army being divided by the Danube, and the difficulty of safe retreat, fight for life or death in the plain of the Marchfeld. It is the invariable characteristic of revolu-

CHAP.

LVII.

1809.

69.
Napoleon's
reasons for
his rash con-
duct.

¹ Las Cases,
vi. 41; vii.
125.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

70.
Glorious
character of
the Austrian
resistance at
Aspern.

tionary power, whether political or military, to be perpetually exposed to this necessity, from the want of any lasting support in the interest and affection of the industrious classes of the people. And it is in the experience of that necessity, not any oblivion of the rules of the military art, that the true explanation and best vindication of Napoleon's conduct, both at Aspern, Moscow, and Dresden, is to be found.

The resolute stand made by the Austrians at Aspern is one of the most glorious instances of patriotic resistance which the history of the world affords. Driven back by an overwhelming force into the heart of the monarchy, with their fortresses taken, their arsenals pillaged, their armies defeated, they still continued the contest; boldly fronted the invader in the plenitude of his power; and with unshaken resolution, advanced, alone and unsupported, to drive the conqueror of Europe from the capital he had subdued. Contrary to what has usually been experienced in similar cases, they showed the world that the fall of the metropolis did not necessarily draw after it the submission of the empire; but that a brave and patriotic people can find their capital in the general's headquarters, and reduce the invader to the extremity of peril, in consequence of the very success which he had deemed decisive of the contest. The British historian can hardly hope that similar resolution would have been displayed by the citizens of his own country; or that a battle of Waterloo would have been fought by the English after London and Woolwich had fallen into the hands of the enemy. Contrasting the heroic battles of Aspern and Wagram, after Vienna had been captured, with the unbounded terror inspired at Paris by the advance of the Duke of Brunswick to Valmy in 1792, a hundred and twenty miles from the capital, even when the people were in the highest state of democratic excitement, it is impossible to avoid the inference—that as much in the conduct of a nation, under such circumstances, depends on the national institutions as on the stage at which they have arrived in social advancement; and in the invincible tenacity and far-seeing sagacity of an aristocratic government is to be found the only guarantee, from the days of Cannæ to those of Aspern, for such an unshaken resolu-

tion, under calamities generally considered as utterly destructive of political independence.

Nor would this heroic constancy have failed in obtaining its appropriate reward, if the admirable directions of the Archduke Charles for the conduct of the campaign had been implicitly obeyed. It was the disobedience of his orders by the Archduke John which deprived the Austrians of all the results of the battle of Aspern, and enabled Napoleon to extricate himself with success from the most perilous situation in which he had yet been placed since ascending the consular throne. Had that prince obeyed the instructions which he received from the generalissimo on the 17th May, and marched direct from Carinthia to Lintz, he would, in conjunction with Kollowrath, who was in that neighbourhood some days before, have been at the head of an imposing mass at least sixty thousand strong, even on the 23d, to which Bernadotte, with his inefficient corps of Saxons, could have opposed no adequate resistance. Can there be a doubt that the concentration of such a force directly in his rear, and on his principal line of communication, at the very moment when he was driven with a defeated army into the island of Lobau, would have compelled Napoleon to retreat; and that the battle of Aspern would have been the commencement of a series of disasters, which would speedily have brought the Imperial eagles back to the Rhine? The instantaneous effect which a similar concentration of force from the north and the south at Borissow, near the Berezina, produced on Napoleon at Moscow, three years afterwards, affords the clearest illustration, both of the importance of this movement, and the prodigious effects which it was fitted to have had, if properly executed, upon the issue of the campaign. No hazard was incurred by such a direction to part of the Imperial forces; for the Tyrol afforded a vast fortress, in which, aided by its gallant mountaineers, the detached corps, though separated from the main forces of the monarchy, might have long maintained themselves against all the efforts of the enemy. And it is impossible to estimate too highly the fortitude and talent of the illustrious general, who, when still reeking with the slaughter of a recent defeat, could conceive so admirable a plan for the circumvention of the

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

71.

Disastrous
effects of the
Archduke
John's dis-
obedience of
orders.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

72.
Immense im-
portance of
central for-
tresses on
the defence
of nations.

enemy, and, undismayed by the fall of the capital, see in that catastrophe only the lure which was to seduce the invader to his ultimate ruin.

From the important consequences which followed the occupation of Vienna, and the seizure of its immense military resources by the French, may be deduced one conclusion of lasting value to every independent state. This is the incalculable importance of every metropolis either being adequately fortified, or possessing, in its immediate vicinity, a citadel of approved strength, capable of containing twenty or thirty thousand soldiers, and of serving as a place of secure deposit for the public archives, stores, wealth, and government, till the national strength can be fairly roused for their rescue. Had Austria possessed such a fortress, either in or near Vienna, the invasions of 1805 and 1809 would have terminated in the invader's ruin: had the heights of Belleville and Montmartre been strongly fortified, the invasions of 1814 and 1815 would have been attended with nothing but disaster to the Allied armies. Had Berlin been of as great strength as Dantzic, the French armies, after the disaster of Jena, would have been detained round its walls till the Russian hosts advanced, and six years of bondage saved to the Prussian monarchy. Had the Kremlin been a citadel capable of holding out six weeks, the terrible sacrifice of Moscow would not have been required: had Vienna not been impregnable to the Mussulman arms, the monarchy would have sunk in the dust before the standards of Sobieski gleamed on the Bisamberg. Had the lines of Torres Vedras not proved an impassable barrier to Massena, the fire of patriotic resistance in the Peninsula would have been extinguished in blood: had the walls of Rome not deterred the Carthaginian hero from a siege, the fortunes of the republic would have sunk after the disaster of Cannæ. It is by no means necessary for these important ends, that the whole metropolis should be environed by fortifications; it is enough that a citadel of great strength is at hand to contain all the warlike and civil resources of the kingdom.

Let no nation imagine that the magnitude of its resources relieves it from this necessity, or that the

effulgence of its glory will secure it from ultimate danger. It was *after* the battle of Austerlitz that Napoleon first felt the necessity of fortifying Paris;¹ it was in nine short years afterwards that the bitter consequences of the national vanity, which prevented his design from being carried into effect, were experienced by the Parisians. England now slumbers secure under the shadow of Trafalgar and Waterloo; but let not her infatuated children suppose that they are for ever removed from the chances of disaster, or that the want of citadels to surround the vast arsenals of Woolwich, Chatham, and the Tower, will not, and that perhaps ere long, be bitterly felt either against foreign or domestic enemies. These ideas, indeed, are not popular with the present age, with whom foresight is the least cultivated of national virtues, and in which the democratic character of the legislature has tinged the government with that disregard of remote consequences, which is the invariable characteristic of the masses of mankind; and, doubtless, if any minister were now to propose the expenditure of one or two millions on such central fortifications, it would raise such a storm as would speedily prove fatal to his administration. It does by no means, however, follow from this circumstance, that it is not a measure which wisdom dictates and national security enjoins; and in despair of effecting, at present at least, any change on public opinion on this particular, the historian has only to bequeath this counsel to the generation after the next, and mark these words, if they should live so long, for the judgment of the world after the expiration of two centuries.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

73.

Infatuation
of England
in this re-
spect.

¹ Nap. in
Month. ii.
278, 280.

CHAPTER LVIII.

WAR IN THE TYROL, NORTHERN GERMANY, AND POLAND.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.
1.
Extraordi-
nary interest
of the
Tyrolean war.

IT is neither on the greatest fields of battle, nor the places where the most calamitous bloodshed has taken place, that the recollection of future ages is chiefly riveted. The vast theatres of Asiatic conflict are forgotten; the slaughtered myriads of Timour and Genghis Khan lie in undistinguished graves; hardly a pilgrim visits the scenes where, on the fields of Chalons and Tours, the destinies of civilisation and Christendom were fixed by the skill of Aëtius or the valour of Charles Martel. It is moral grandeur which produces a durable impression; it is patriotic heroism which permanently attracts the admiration of mankind. The pass of Thermopylæ, the graves of Marathon, will warm the hearts of men through every succeeding age: the chapel of Tell, the field of Morgarten, still attract the generous and brave from every civilised state: the name of Wallace, the plain of Bannockburn, have rendered Scottish story immortal in the annals of the world. The time may come when the vast and desolating wars of the French Revolution shall be dimmed in the obscurity of revolving years; when the great name of Napoleon is recollected only as a shadow of ancient days, and the fields of his fame are buried in the waves of succeeding change; but even then, the siege of Saragossa will stand forth in undecaying lustre from amid the gloom of ages; and the war in the Tyrol, the strife of La Vendée, survive unshaken above the floods of time.

The country now immortalised under the name of

the Tyrol, the land of Hofer and Spechbacher, lies on the southern frontier of Germany, and is composed of the mountains which, stretching eastward from the Alps of Switzerland, are interposed between the Bavarian plains and the fields of Italy. Less elevated than those of the Helvetic cantons, without the awful sublimity of the Alps of the Oberland, or the savage wildness of the Aiguilles of Chamouny, those of the Tyrol are still more romantic, from the singular and imposing character which they in general bear, and the matchless beauty of the narrow valleys, or rather clefts, which are interspersed around their feet. Their summits, though in one or two cases little inferior in height to the Jungfrau or the Titlis,* are more rugged than those of Switzerland, from being, in general, somewhat lower, and in consequence less charged with snow, and exhibiting their various strata, ravines, and peaks, in more undisguised grandeur than where a silver mantle has been for ever thrown over the higher regions. The general level of the country is less elevated than the central parts of Helvetia, and hence it is often more beautiful: the pine and larch do not appear in such monotonous masses; but noble forests of beech and oak clothe the mountain sides to a greater height than any hills in Britain, and a dark zone of pine separates their brilliant hues from the gray piles of rock, or snow-besprinkled peaks which repose in undisturbed serenity on the azure firmament.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

2.
Description
of Tyrol.¹ Personal
Observation.
Malte Brun,
vii. 510, 511.
Ingli's
Tyrol, i. 241.

The northern and southern slopes of the Alps exhibit here, as elsewhere on the sides of the great stony girdle of the globe, the same remarkable difference in the productions of nature, the character of the landscape, and the disposition of the human species. To the north of the central chain of the Brenner, every thing wears a frigid aspect. Vast forests of pine and fir clothe the middle regions of the mountains; naked rock or masses of snow compose their highest peaks; extensive pastures afford nourishment to numerous flocks and herds; barley and oats constitute the principal food of the inhabitants, and Indian corn is cultivated only in the rich and shel-

3.
Opposite
character of
the northern
and southern
sides of the
mountains.

* The Gross Glockner is 12,400, and the Orteler-Spitz 14,500 feet high: those on the frontiers of Salzburg of little less elevation.—MALTE BRUN, vii. 511; and INGLIS'S *Tyrol*, ii. 250.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

tered vale of the Inn. The inhabitants, like all those of Germanic descent, are brave, impetuous, and honest; tenacious of custom, fearless of danger, addicted to intemperance. But to the south of the range, these rigid features insensibly melt away under the increasing warmth of a more genial climate; maize and wheat are reared with assiduous care in the few level spots which are interspersed among the rocks; walnut and cherry trees next give token of the approach of a milder atmosphere; beech and sweet chestnut succeed to the sable pine in the woody region above; the vine and the mulberry are found in the sheltered bosoms of the valleys; and at length the olive and the pomegranate nestle in the sunny nooks, where, on the margin of the Lake of Guarda, the blasts of winter are averted by a leafy screen of almost perpetual verdure. But if the gifts of nature improve as the traveller descends to the plains of Lombardy, the character of man declines: with the sweet accents of the Italian tongue, the vices of civilisation, the craft of the south, have sensibly spread. The cities are more opulent, the churches more costly, the edifices more sumptuous; but the native virtues of the German population are no longer conspicuous: the love of freedom, the obligation of truth, the sanctity of an oath, are more faintly discerned; iron bars on the windows of the poor, tell but too clearly that the fearless security of general virtue is no longer felt; and the multiplication of criminals and police, bespeaks at once the vices and necessities of a corrupted society.¹ *

¹ Inglis's
Tyrol, ii.
240, 290.
Personal
Observation.

4.
Description
of the great
valleys and
rivers of the
Tyrol.

Switzerland contains some spacious and fertile plains, and extensive lakes diversify the generally rugged aspect of nature; but the Tyrol is a country of mountains, intersected only by a few long and spacious valleys. Of these, those of the Inn, the Eisach, the Adige, and the Pusterthal, are the most considerable. The first is formed by the river Inn, commencing on the eastern slope of the mountains of Grisons: it extends nearly a hundred miles almost in a straight line in a north-easterly direction,

* Out of eighty prisoners in Innsbruck jail in 1832, fifty-five were from the Italian Tyrol, though its population is only one hundred and sixty-three thousand, while that of the German portion is five hundred and ninety-eight thousand.—INGLIS'S *Tyrol*, i. 185; and MALTE BRUN, vii. 550.

and under the successive names of the Engadine, the Upper* and the Lower Innthal, extends from Finstermunz on the frontiers of Switzerland, to Kufstein at the opening of the Bavarian plains. It is at first a cold and desolate pastoral glen, gradually opening into a cultivated vale, shut in by pine-clad hills, of savage character; and for the last fifty miles expands into a spacious valley, varying from two to six miles in breadth, whose fertile bottom, perfectly flat, shut in on either side by precipitous mountains seven or eight thousand feet in height, is adorned with numerous villages, churches, and towns, and maintains a dense and industrious population. The valley of the Eisach, formed by the confluence, at Brixen, of the torrents which descend from the snowy summits of the Brenner and the Gross Terner on the one side, and the mountains of the Pusterthal on the other, descends beside an impetuous stream, through the narrow passes and chestnut-clad steeps between Brixen and Bolsano. It is at length lost, at the latter place, in the larger valley of the Adige, which, stretching out to the south in a wide expanse between piles of fir-clad mountains to Trent and Roveredo, gradually warms under the Italian sun, till, after passing the frightful gorge of the Italian Chiusa, it opens into the smiling hills and vine-clad slopes of Verona.¹ *

CHAP.

LVIII.

1809.

¹ Malte Brun, vii. 511. Personal Observation.

The valley of the Etch, or Adige, descending from the cold and shivering Alps of Glarus, widens into the Passeyrthal, the original seat of the Counts of Tyrol, still containing their venerable castle, and which has been immortalised as containing the birthplace of Hofer. It is distinguished by an awful rapid, which, more nearly than any thing in Europe, resembles those of the great American rivers, equalling even the fall of Schaffhausen

5. Valley of the Adige and its rapid.

* This noble scene, one of the most striking gorges in the Alps, has been immortalised in the lines of Dante:

“ Era lo loco ove a scender la riva,
Venimmo Alpestro, e per quel ch' ivi er' anco
Tal ch' ogni vista ne sarebbe schiva.
Qual è quella ruina che nel fianco
Di qua da Trento, l' Adice percosse
O per tremuoto o per sostegno manco,
Che da cima del monte onde se mosse
Al piano è sì la roccia discosciosa,
Ch' alcuna via darebbe a chi su fosse.”

DANTE, *Inferno*, Canto xli. 1-9.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Personal
Observation,
Inglist's
Tyrol, i. 289,
290. Malte
Brun, vii.
511.

in sublimity and terror ; * after descending this foaming declivity, and forcing its way through stupendous rocks, the Adige joins the vale of the Eisach at Bolsano. These are the principal valleys of Tyrol, but the upper parts of several others belong to the same country ; in particular, those of the Drave, the Salza, and the Brenta. The two first, descending from opposite sides of the Gross Glockner, find their way into the open country, through long defiles of matchless beauty : the former, after washing the battlements of Klagenfurth, to the Hungarian plains ; the latter, beneath the towers of Salzburg, to the waters of the Danube : while the Brenta, after struggling through the narrow clefts, and romantic peaks of the Val Sugana, emerges in still serenity into the Italian fields under the mouldering walls of Bassano.¹

^{6.}
Castles of the
Tyrol.

With the exception of the Grisons, Switzerland contains few ruined castles. The moral earthquake which five centuries ago overthrew the feudal power of Austria in the Forest Cantons, cast down in its subsequent shocks the authority of the barons in their simple valleys. But the case is otherwise in the Tyrol. Though enjoying, practically speaking, popular privileges of the most extensive kind, and yielding in no respect to the descendants of Tell in the ardent love of freedom, the Tyrolese have never gone so far as to expel the great proprietors ; and though few of them are still resident in the country, the remains of their immense castles constitute one of its most peculiar and characteristic features. In every valley they are to be seen, rising in imposing majesty on wooded heights, perched on crags overhanging the floods, or resting on cliffs to all appearance inaccessible to human approach. The effect of these venerable and mouldering remains, surmounting the beautiful woods, and throwing an air of

* This remarkable rapid, the only one which conveys to a European traveller an idea of this striking feature of Transatlantic scenery, is thus described with graphic power and perfect fidelity by a distinguished traveller now unfortunately no more :—" At this spot the river Adige presents one of the most magnificent spectacles that are to be met with in Europe—a rapid, almost a cataract, nearly a mile in length—one continued sheet of foam, rushing with a deafening noise and resistless force between green pastoral banks more resembling the shores of a gentle lake than of a cataract. There is no fall of water in Switzerland that will bear a comparison with this : it is not, indeed, strictly a cataract, but a waterfall of the most stupendous and imposing kind, more striking, even, than the celebrated falls of Schaffhausen."—INGLIS's *Tyrol*, ii. 240. On a miniature scale, the falls of Kilmorag, beyond Inverness, somewhat resemble these sublime rapids.—*Personal Observation.*

Gothic interest over the wildest ranges of the mountains, is inexpressibly charming. They go far to compensate the comparative absence of lakes, which alone are wanting to render the scenery of this country the most enchanting in Europe. Almost all these castles have their legends or romantic incidents, many of them connected with the Holy Wars, which are fondly dwelt on by the inhabitants : in several, the weapons and armour of the heroes of the crusades are still preserved ; and the traveller, in treading their long-deserted halls, feels himself suddenly transported to the age of Godfrey of Bouillon, or Richard of England, and all the pomp and interest of chivalrous exploits.¹*

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Personal
Observation.

Tyrol Proper has few lakes, though the adjoining countries of Styria, Salzburg, and Bavaria, have several. Two most beautiful ones, the Kochel See and Walchen See, adjoin the great road from Munich to Innspruck, and give token to the enraptured traveller of his approach to the mountain region. The first, which much resembles, though on a grander and more perfect scale, Loch Katrine in Scotland, is described by an author who has transferred into romance the hues and colouring of nature :—"From the lake up to the very sky, on three sides stretched the mountains, like Titan steps whereby to scale the heavens, but divided at different angles by intervening valleys, up which was seen the long blue perspective of interminable hills beyond. The first step of that mountain throne, carpeted as if with green velvet by pastures still unembrowned and rich, was covered with sheep and cattle feeding in peace. Beyond that appeared a range clothed with glowing woods of oak, elm, and beech, filled with the more timid and gentle inhabitants of the sylvan world ; while above, tenanted by the wolf, the fox, and other beasts of prey, stretched wide the region of the pine and fir ; and towering over all, gray, cold, and awful,

7.
Its lakes.

* Eight-and-twenty colossal bronze statues of princes and paladins of the dark ages, in armour, stand around the tomb of Maximilian I. in the church of Holycross in Innspruck, and the effect of the group is extremely impressive ; though hardly equal to that of the simple tomb of Hofer, which it also contains, whose remains were brought there from his grave at Mantua in 1823. The castle of Ambras, near Innspruck, formerly contained an unique collection of ancient armour, which, when the author visited it in 1816, was one of the most interesting spectacles in Europe ; but the greater part of these precious remains have since been removed to the Imperial museum at Vienna.—See *INGLIS's Tyrol*, I. 200, 219 ; and *EUSTACE's Italy*, I. 91.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

† James's
Attila, ii.
141.

8.
Superstitions
of the
country.

‡ Barth.
Krieg von
1809. Per-
sonal Infor-
mation.
Gesch. And.
Hofer, 32, 36.

rose the peaks of primeval granite, with nothing but the proud eagle soaring between them and heaven. Below, the lake, unruffled by a breeze, lay calm and still, offering a mirror to the beauty of the scene, where every line of picturesque loveliness was reflected without a change, and all the varied colouring around, from the rich brown of the autumnal woods to the purple of the distant mountains, and the floods of amber and of rose that evening was pouring along the glowing sky."¹

In every part of the world, mountainous regions have been the nursery of superstitious feeling. The greatest works of man there appear as nothing compared to the magnificence of nature, and the individual is left in solitude, to receive the impressions which the sublime scenery in which he is placed is fitted to produce. Upon minds so circumstanced, the changes of external nature come to be considered as the immediate work of some invisible power. The shadows that fall on the lakes at sunrise are interpreted as the approach of hostile bands; the howl of the wind through the forests is thought to be the lamentations of the dead who are expiating their sins, and the mists that flit over the summit of the mountains seem to be the distant skirts of vast armies, borne on the whirlwind and treading on the storm. The influence of these feelings is strongly felt in the Tyrol; and the savage mountains or ruined castles with which it abounds have become peopled with the phantoms of a romantic superstition. Lights are said to have been often observed at night in towers which have been uninhabited for centuries, and bloody figures distinctly seen to flit through their deserted halls. The armour which still hangs on the walls in many of the greater castles, has been observed to move, and the plumes to wave, when the Tyrolese arms were victorious in war. Groans, they affirm, are still heard in the neighbourhood of the dungeons, where the victims of feudal tyranny were formerly sacrificed[‡]; and the cruel baron, who persecuted his people in his savage passion for the chase, is often heard to shriek in the forests of the Unterberg,* and to howl as he flies from the dogs whom he had trained to the scent of human blood.²

* A romantic mountain, six miles from Salzburg, at the entrance of the beautiful valley of Berchtesgaden.

Superstitions, too, of a gentler and more holy kind have arisen from the devout feelings of the people, and the associations connected with the particular spots where persons of extraordinary sanctity have dwelt. In many of the farthest recesses of the mountains, on the verge of perpetual desolation, hermits in former times had fixed their abode; and the imagination of the peasant still fancies that their spirits hover around the spots where their earthly trials were endured. Shepherds, who have passed in the gloom of the evening by the cell where the bones of a saint are laid, relate that they distinctly heard his voice, as he repeated his vesper prayers, and saw his form, as he knelt before the crucifix which the piety of succeeding ages had erected in his hermitage. The image of many a patron saint has been seen to shed tears when a reverse has happened to the Tyrolese arms; and the garlands which are hung round the crosses of the Virgin wither when the hand which raised them has fallen in battle. Peasants who have been driven by a storm to take shelter in the little chapels which are scattered over the country, have seen the crucifix bow its head, and solemn music is heard at vespers in the higher places of worship among the mountains. The distant pealing of the organ, and the chant of innumerable voices, are there distinctly heard; and the peasant, when returning at night from the chase, often trembles when he beholds funeral processions clothed in white, marching in silence through the gloom of the forests, or slowly moving on the clouds that float over the summits of the mountains.¹

It may easily be imagined how strongly these feelings were excited by the approach of the war of deliverance in 1809. The emissaries of Austria had long before prepared the people for revolt; foreign oppression had led them to desire it with passionate ardour; unknown to Bavaria, the whole population were impatiently expecting the signal to rise. During this period of anxious expectation, the excited minds of the people clothed the air with an unusual number of imaginary appearances. In the gloom of the evening, endless files of visionary soldiers, clad in the Austrian uniform—cavalry, infantry, and artillery—were seen to traverse the mountain-tops. The creaking of the wheels, the tramp of the horses, the

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

9.
Their religious feelings and impressions.1 Barth.
Krieg von
1809, 382,
394. Personal Information.10.
Omens which were observed on the approach of the war.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

heavy tread of marching columns, intermingled with wild bursts of laughter and shouts of triumph, were distinctly heard; but all was hushed, and the spectres melted into mist and vapour, when the anxiety of the spectators induced them to approach too nearly. The Tyrolese, nay, the Bavarian sentinels themselves, often beheld the Emperor's tower in the fortress of Kufstein surrounded with lambent fire; and the Austrian banners, wrapped in flames, were seen to wave at night over the towers of Sterzing. Withered arms appeared to stretch themselves from the rocks in the most secluded recesses of the mountains; vast armies of visionary soldiers, with banners flying, and all the splendour of military triumph, were seen at sunrise reflected in the lakes which lay on the Salzburg and Bavarian frontiers. When the widows and orphans of the fallen warriors knelt before the Virgin, the flowers and garlands placed round the image, according to the amiable custom of Catholic countries, and which had remained there till they had withered, burst forth in renovated beauty, and spread their fragrance around the altar, as if to mark the joy of the dead for the approaching deliverance of their country.¹

¹ Personal Information. Barth. Krieg von 1809, 474, 482. Gesch. And. Hofer, 17, 32.

• 11.
Powerful religious feelings of the people.

The most remarkable feature in the national character of the Tyrolese is their uniform piety: a principle which is nowhere more universally diffused than in their sequestered valleys. The most cursory view of the country is sufficient to demonstrate the strong hold which religion has taken of the minds of the peasantry. Chapels are built almost at every half mile, on the principal roads, in which the traveller may perform his devotions, or which may awaken his thoughts to a recollection of his spiritual duties. The rude efforts of art have there been exerted to portray the events of our Saviour's life; and innumerable figures, carved in wood, attest in every part of the country, both the barbarous taste of the people and the fervour of their religious impressions. Even in the higher parts of the mountains, where hardly any vestiges of human cultivation are to be found, in the depths of untrodden forests, or on the summit of seemingly inaccessible cliffs, the symbols of devotion are to be found, and the cross rises every where amidst the wilderness, as if to mark the triumph of religion over the greatest obstacles

of nature. Nor is it only in the solitudes or deserts that the proofs of their devotion are to be found. In the valleys and in the cities it still preserves its ancient sway over the people. On the exterior of most houses, the legend of some favourite saint, or the suffering of some popular martyr, are delineated; and the inhabitant deems himself secure from the greater evils of life under such heavenly guardianship. In every valley numerous spires are to be seen, rising amidst the beauty of the surrounding scene, and reminding the traveller on the eastern frontier and in the Styrian fields, by the cupola form in which they are constructed, of his approach to the regions of the East. On Sunday, the whole people flock to church in their neatest and gayest attire; and so great is the number who thus frequent these places of worship, that it is not uncommon to see the peasants kneeling on the turf in the churchyard while mass is performed, from being unable to find a place within their walls. Regularly in the evening, prayers are read in every family; and the traveller who passes through the villages at the hour of twilight, often sees through their latticed windows the young and the old kneeling together round their humble fire, or is warned of his approach to human habitation by hearing their hymns stealing through the silence and solitude of the forest.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Personal Observation. Barth. Krieg du Tyroler Landleute, 64, 72.

Nor has their religion become corrupted by many of the errors which, in more advanced stages of civilisation, have dimmed the light or perverted the usefulness of the Catholic church. Mingled, indeed, with a large intermixture of superstition, and interwoven as it is with innumerable legends and visionary tales, it yet preserves enough of the pure spirit of its divine origin to influence, in a great degree, the conduct of their private lives. The Tyrolese have not yet learned that immorality in private may be absolved by ceremony in public, or that the profession of faith can win a dispensation from the rules of obedience. The purchase of absolution by money is almost unknown among them: and absolution is never conferred, unless application for it is accompanied, according to the true Catholic principle, by the profession at least of genuine repentance. In no part of the world are the domestic

12. Practical utility of the priests.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Tacitus de
Mor. Germ.

or conjugal duties more strictly or faithfully performed : "*Nec corrumpere et corrumpi seculum vocatur.*"¹* In none do the parish priests exercise a stricter or more conscientious control over the conduct of their flocks. Their influence is not weakened, as in a more advanced state of society, by a discordance of religious tenets ; nor is the consideration due to their sacred function lost in the homage paid to rank, opulence, or power. Placed in the midst of a people who acknowledge no superiors, and who live almost universally on the produce of their little domains ; strangers alike to the arts of luxury and the seductions of fashion, the parish priests are equally removed from temptation themselves, and relieved from the necessity of guarding against the great sources of wickedness in others. Each pastor is at once the priest and the judge of his parishioners, the infallible criterion in matters of faith, and the general umpire in the occasional disputes which occur among them. Hence has arisen that remarkable veneration for their spiritual guides by which the peasantry are distinguished ; and it is to this cause that we are to ascribe the fact, common to Tyrol with La Vendée, that, while their nobles were generally absent or lukewarm in the cause, the people followed with alacrity the call of their pastors to take up arms in behalf of their religion and ancient princes.²

² Personal
Observation.
Barth. Krieg
von 1809, 24,
31.

13.
Remarkable
difference in
this respect of
ancient and
modern
times.

In ancient times the Alps were inhabited by fierce and barbarous tribes,—and the classical writers have exhausted their eloquence in painting the horrors of the climate and the savage manners of the inhabitants of those unexplored regions.† Often the Roman legions were impeded in their progress, sometimes thinned in their numbers, by these cruel barbarians ; and even after the mountaineers of the Rhætian Alps had been reduced to subjection by the expedition of Drusus, it was still esteemed a service of the utmost danger to deviate from the highways, and even an affair of considerable peril to traverse the passes by the great roads themselves. Almost all the inscriptions on the votive offerings which have been discovered

* "Nor to corrupt and be corrupted is called the manners of the age."

† "Nivesque cælo prope immixtæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore, homines intonsi et inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia regentia gelu ; cætera visu, quam dictu, fœdiora, terrorem renovarunt."—Livy, lib. xxi.

in such numbers around the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Penninus, on the Great St Bernard, and which come down to the latest periods of the empire, are filled with warm expressions of gratitude for having escaped the extraordinary *perils* of the passage. Hence the singular fact, almost incredible in modern times, that even in the days of Pliny, several hundred years after the first passage of the Alps by the Roman troops, the sources both of the Rhine and the Iser were unknown; and that the naturalist of Rome was content to state, a century subsequent to the establishment of a Roman station at Sion in the Valais, that "the Rhine took its rise in the most hidden parts of the earth, in the region of perpetual night, amidst forests for ever inaccessible to human approach." Few attempts appear to have been made by any of the Romans in later times to explore the remoter recesses of the mountains, now so familiar to every traveller; none to reclaim or humanise their inhabitants: their reduction, even by the legions, is enumerated with pride, as one of the greatest exploits of the Emperors.¹ Magnificent highways, constructed across their summits, connected Italy with the northern provinces of the empire; but they suffered the valleys on either side to remain in their pristine state of barbarism, and the Roman colonists hastened into more distant regions to spread that cultivation of which the Alps, with their rude inhabitants, seemed to them incapable. This inability to civilise a vast amphitheatre of mountains in the heart of their empire, would appear inconceivable in so great a people as the Romans, did we not perceive the counterpart of it in the present condition of the Caucasian range, the inhabitants of which maintain a savage independence in the midst of all the civilisation and power of the Russian empire, and the predatory habits of whom are sufficiently evinced by their proverbial expressions, notwithstanding all the efforts of modern enthusiasm or credulity to represent them in more interesting colours.*

Plin. iii. 24.

* See SPENCER'S *Circassia*, *passim*. The eloquent author of these interesting travels has given a glowing account of the virtues and character of the tribes who dwell in the recesses of the Caucasus; but it is evident, even from what he says, that they are nothing better than gallant robbers. The common expression which he tells us is used by a Circassian maiden to a lover whom she

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

14.
Influence of
religion in
producing the
Tyrolese
character.

What is it, then, which has wrought so surprising a change in the manners and habits of the inhabitants in Europe of the great mountain girdle of the earth? What is it which has spread cultivation through wastes deemed in ancient times inaccessible to improvement, and humanised the manners of a people remarkable only, under the Roman sway, for the ferocity and barbarism of their customs? What but the influence of religion; of that faith which has calmed the savage passions of the human mind, and spread its beneficial influence among the remotest habitations of men, and which prompted its disciples to leave the luxuries and comforts of southern civilisation to diffuse knowledge and humanity through inhospitable realms, and spread, even amidst the regions of desolation, the light of knowledge and the blessings of Christianity? Impressed with these ideas, the traveller, in crossing the St Bernard, and comparing the perfect safety with which he can now explore the most solitary parts of these mountains, with the perils of the passage as attested by the votive offerings even in the days of Adrian and the Antonines, will think with gratitude of the religion by which this wonderful change has been effected, and with veneration of the saint whose name has for a thousand years been affixed to the pass where his influence first reclaimed the people from their barbarous life: and in crossing the defile of Mount Brenner, where the abbey of Wilten first offered an asylum to the pilgrim, he will feel with a late amiable and eloquent writer, "how fortunate it is that religion has penetrated these fastnesses, impervious to human power, and, where precautions are impossible and resistance useless, spread her invisible ægis over the traveller, and conducts him secure under her protection through all the dangers of his way. When in such situations he reflects upon his security, and

despises, "Him! he has never yet stole a Tcherhemorsky cow," speaks volumes as to the real character of this people, and corroborates the unfavourable picture of their customs drawn by a much more experienced and judicious observer, Clarke, who describes them as a nest of freebooters. "The Circassians are almost all robbers by profession. The descriptions given of natives in the South Seas do not present human nature in a more savage state than its condition exhibits among the Caucasians. Instructed from their infancy to consider war and plunder not only as a necessary but an honourable occupation, they bear in their countenances the most striking expressions of ferocious valour and of duplicity."—See CLARKE's *Travels*, chap. I, vol. ii. 34, 35.

recollects that these mountains, so savage and so well adapted to the purposes of murderers and banditti, have not in the memory of man been stained with human blood, he ought to do justice to the cause, and gratefully to acknowledge the influence of religion. Impressed with these ideas, he will behold with indulgence, perhaps even with interest, the crosses which frequently mark the brow of a precipice, and the little chapels hollowed out of the rock where the road is narrowed; he will consider them as so many pledges of security, and rest assured that so long as the pious mountaineer continues to adore the 'good Shepherd,' and to implore the prayer of the afflicted mother, he will never cease to befriend the traveller nor to discharge the duties of hospitality."¹*

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Eustace's
Travels, i. 93.

Though inhabiting the same mountain range, and under the influence of the same climate as the Swiss, the Tyrolese are distinguished by a totally different national character; a striking example of the undying influence of that difference of race which appears to stamp indelible features on the remotest generations of men. Both have the usual qualities of mountaineers—a bold and intrepid character, a frame fitted to endure toil, a soul capable of despising danger; both are distinguished by their uniform and enthusiastic love of freedom, and both have been made illustrious in every age by their heroic and martial exploits. But, nevertheless, the fundamental principles of their life are different. The Tyrolese is animated with an ardent and enthusiastic loyalty; attachment to the House of Austria has ever distinguished him; he mingles prayers for his beloved Kaiser with his supplications for his family and his country. The Swiss, nursed in republican ideas, abhors the very name or emblems of royalty. The Tyrolese is ardent, impetuous, sometimes inconsiderate; the Swiss grave, reflecting, always tenacious: the former seldom quits his native valleys for foreign service, and has never sold his blood in mercenary bands; the latter is to be found in the remotest countries of Europe, and has in every age lent out his valour for foreign gold.²

15.
National
character of
the Tyrolese
compared
with that of
the Swiss.

² Personal
Observation.

* It is to the unceasing efforts of the clergy, during the many centuries that elapsed between the fall of the Roman empire and the revival of knowledge, that the judicious historian of Switzerland ascribes the early civilisation and humane disposition in modern times of the Helvetic tribes, and invariably the first traces of order and industry appeared in the immediate neighbourhood of the religious establishments.—See FLANTA'S *Switzerland*, l. 17, et seq.

**CHAP.
LVIII.**

1809.

16.
Love of
freedom
which ani-
mates the
people.
Their cha-
racter and
manners.

Patriotic devotion strongly animates both ; but in the Tyrolese it is dignified by disinterested attachment to the throne ; in the Swiss, somewhat dimmed by its union with the thirst for individual aggrandisement.

Notwithstanding, however, the long-established and hereditary loyalty of the Tyrolese, there is no part of Europe where the love of freedom is more strongly felt, or its practical blessings have been more uninterruptedly enjoyed. In every part of the country, the bold and martial air of the peasantry, their athletic form and fearless eye, bespeak the liberty and independence which they enjoy. Often the people carry arms, universally they possess them ; on Sundays or holidays they usually appear with costly weapons in their belts or slung over their shoulders, as a mark at once of their wealth and privileges. The frequent exercise of the chase, and the universal practice of firing at targets and serving in the militia or trained bands, have given them a great degree of proficiency in the use of fire-arms ; of which the French and Bavarians, in the course of the war, had ample experience. It was in a great degree in consequence of the extraordinary perfection of the Tyrolese marksmen, that the inhabitants of the province, with little aid from the Austrian armies, were enabled for so long a period to make head against the united forces of France and Bavaria. Their dress is singularly calculated to add to this impression. That of the men consists, in general, of a broad-brimmed hat, sometimes ornamented by a feather ; a jacket, tight to the shape, but generally worn open, and exhibiting a red or green waistcoat ; a broad girdle, richly ornamented, fastened in front by a large buckle of costly workmanship ; embossed braces worn over the waistcoat, and supporting tight breeches, which, with gaiters up to the knee, are invariably made of black leather. The colours of the attire, especially about the breast, are brilliant and varied, and, with the pistols or knife stuck in the girdle, bespeak a degree of opulence rarely to be met with in the actual cultivators of any other country. But every thing about them indicates general and long-established well-being, and demonstrates that the opulence which industry had won, has been fearlessly and habitually displayed by the possessors. They are courteous and hospitable in their manner to-

wards strangers: but they expect a similar treatment from these; and in no country of Europe is an insult more likely to be avenged, or is the peasant more ready to redress with his own hands any wrong, whether real or imaginary, which he may have received. Honest, sincere, and brave, the people are yet warm in their temperament; and acknowledging no superiors, and being but little habituated to gradation of rank, they expect to be treated on all occasions on the footing of respect and equality. But if this is done, in no part of the world will the foreigner experience a more courteous reception, or can he repose with more perfect security on the honesty and fidelity of the inhabitants.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Malte Brun, vii. 516. Personal Observation. Inglis's Tyrol, i. 162, 164.

The two circumstances which have mainly contributed to nourish these independent and manly feelings in the Tyrolese peasantry, are the practical freedom of their government, and the circumstance of their being, in general, proprietors of the lands which they cultivate. Though forming part of a despotic monarchy, ever since the acquisition of their province by Austria in 1363, the Tyrolese have uniformly been in the practical possession of all the blessings of freedom; and from the earliest times they have enjoyed the two grand privileges of voting for representative assemblies, and not being taxed without their own consent.* Impressed with the bold and impetuous character of these fearless mountaineers, as well as the vast importance, in a military point of view, of their country to the defence of the Hereditary States, the Austrians not only never made any attempt to infringe their privileges, but treated the inhabitants with such lenity, that they knew government only by the protection and benefits which it afforded. The taxes were so light as to be almost imperceptible; civil appointments were almost all filled by natives; municipal officers elected by the people; customhouse restraints were hardly felt; the con-

17.
Practical freedom which the people have always enjoyed under the Austrian government.

* In the Tyrol, as in Sweden, the four orders of nobles, clergy, burghers, and peasants, met in a general convocation at Innsbruck, where the president was chosen by the suffrages of the united body. The Bishops of Trent and Brixen were usually elected alternately for that situation. In these assemblies, all matters relative to taxation, as well as the calling out the militia, were settled; and in order to facilitate the latter, a sort of conscription was established, and the days of service, being in general forty-two, were fixed upon. These days were a period of festivity and recreation to the youth upon whom the lot fell. To the latest times, previous to the cession of the province to Bavaria in 1805, these privileges had been religiously observed by the Austrian government.—MULLER'S *Gesch.* ii. 27, 28.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

scription was unknown. Four battalions of light-armed troops were all that was required by government from the province, though it contained seven hundred thousand souls—a requisition rather felt as a privilege than a burden, as it afforded a vent to their numerous and warlike youth—and these regiments were always filled up by volunteers. But the whole male inhabitants were enrolled in the militia, and regularly instructed in the rudiments of the military art and ball-practice. Twenty thousand men, capable of being augmented to double that force in case of need, were at all times ready to defend their mountains, and often, by their hardihood and valour, rendered essential service to the monarchy in the most critical periods of its history.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, vii.
516, 517.
Gesch. And.
Hofer, 14, 15.
Barth. 64, 72.

18.
The peasants
are all owners
of their land.
Great influ-
ence of this
on their cha-
racter.

In the German Tyrol, the peasantry are almost all owners of the land they cultivate; a state of things of all others the most favourable to social happiness, when not brought about by the spoliation of others, and accompanied by a tolerable administration of government. It is much less so on the Italian side of the mountains: there, great proprietors, with their attendant evils of non-resident gentry and resident middlemen, are to be found. Hence, in a great degree, as well as in the original difference of race, the wide distinction between these two great divisions of the country in the character and independence of the people. Their look, their customs, their character, are essentially distinct. In the German Tyrol are to be seen a national dress, primitive usages, early hours, independent character, intrepid resolution; in the Italian, polished manners, harmonious accent, opulent cities, selfish craft, enervating luxury. The line between the two, however, is not to be drawn merely according to the flow of the waters into the Danube or the Po; the German population has overpassed the crest of the mountains, and come far down towards the Italian plains; all the valleys of the Adige and the Eisach above Bolsano are inhabited by the northern brood, who, with the harsh language and fair hair, have preserved the virtues and customs of their fathers. The population of German, is nearly four times that of Italian descent; and in all struggles for freedom or independence, though the latter has not been wanting in energetic characters, the weight of the contest has fallen upon the Gothic race.²

² Malte
Brun, vii.
550. Inglis,
i. 164, 167.
Personal
Observation.

To complete the picture of this highly interesting people, it is on'y necessary to observe, that they are all frugal and industrious, that domestic manufactures are to be found in many of their cottages, and valuable salt-mines at Hall, on the lower Inn; but that the great reliance of the people is on the resources of agriculture. The wonderful effect of a general diffusion of property in stimulating the efforts of individual industry, is nowhere more conspicuous. The grass which grows on the sides of declivities too steep for pasture, is carefully cut for the cattle: the atmospheric action on rocks is rendered serviceable by conveying their debris to cultivated fields; and the stranger sometimes observes with astonishment a Tyrolese peasant, with a basket in his hand, descending inaccessible rocks, by means of a rope, in order that he may gain a few feet of land at the bottom, and devote it to agriculture. All the family labour at the little paternal estate; the daughters tend the cows, or bring in the grass; the sons work with the father in the field, or carry on some species of manufacture within doors. Notwithstanding this universal industry, however, the country is too sterile to maintain, from its own resources, its numerous inhabitants. A large proportion of it is covered with forest, a still larger is desert rock or snow, tenanted only by the chamois and the marmot; and a considerable portion of the people are yearly induced to seek the means of bettering their condition in neighbouring and richer countries, from whence such of them as prosper return, after many years of absence, to purchase a little domain in their beloved valleys.¹

The Tyrolese are of a singularly mechanical turn. Necessity has driven them to the useful arts as a means of supplying the deficiencies of nature; and the numerous mountain streams and cascades, with which the country abounds, afford ample opportunity of obtaining, at no expense, an external power capable of setting in motion their simple machinery. Conducted into the fields, the houses, and mills, by little wooden troughs, in the course of their precipitous descent, the mountain torrents perform the most important functions of domestic economy. The irrigation of meadows, the grinding of corn, the making of oil, the fabrication of tools, are all performed by these

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

19.

Astonishing
industry of
the people.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 21.
Malte Brun,
vii. 514, 515.
Barth. Krieg
von 1809, 74,
78.

20.
Mechanical
contrivances
in the Tyrol.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1800.

¹ Malte
Brun, vii.
549-551.

21.
Discontent
of the people
under the
Bavarian
government.

streams, or the mills which they set in motion. In many places each peasant has his mill, which is applied to almost every purpose of life—even the rocking of a cradle is sometimes performed by means of a water-wheel. Nor are the most minute arts overlooked by this industrious people; and numbers of families earn a not contemptible livelihood by rearing canary birds, which are sold in all the cities of Europe.*

To a people of such a character, and enjoying such advantages under the paternal government of their ancient princes, their forcible transference to the rule of Bavaria by the treaty of Presburg had been the subject of inextinguishable aversion. The cabinet of Munich, little acquainted with the character of the inhabitants, ignorant of the delicacy requisite in the management of free-born mountaineers, and relying on the powerful military aid of France and the Rhenish confederacy, adopted the dangerous policy, without attempting to remedy their grievances, of coercing their discontents by force. Though all their privileges were solemnly guaranteed by Bavaria in the treaty of Presburg, 1805,† yet no sooner were the Bavarian authorities established in the country, than all these stipulations were basely violated. The court of Munich seemed intent only on making the utmost of their new acquisition, as if under a presentiment that their tenure of it was not destined to be of very long duration. The constitution, which had subsisted for ages, was overthrown by a royal edict: the representative estates were suppressed, and the provincial funds seized. No less than eight new and oppressive

* The following are some of the more important statistical facts connected with the population of the Tyrol, viz.—

			Acres.
Inhabitants,	762,000	Meadows,	32,000
Cows,	131,000	Fields,	152,000
Sheep,	137,000	Vineyards,	1,700
Oxen,	44,000	Forests,	1,508,600
Goats,	63,000	Rock and waste,	2,906,700
Elementary Schools,	735	German race,	598,580
Do., endowed by government,	15	Italian race,	163,420

The people are all Roman Catholics. The great proportion of the country in forest and rock is very remarkable, and sufficiently explains its romantic character.—See MALTE BRUN, vii. 549, 551.

† “The above-mentioned countries (the Tyrol and Vorarlberg) shall be enjoyed by his Majesty the King of Bavaria in the same manner, and with the same rights and prerogatives as the Emperor of Germany and Austria, and the princes of his House, enjoyed them, and no otherwise.”—*Treaty of Presburg*, Dec. 26, 1805, Art. 8; MARTEN'S *Sup.* iv. 215.

taxes were imposed, and levied with the utmost rigour : the country, after the model of revolutionary France, was divided into the departments of the Inn, the Etch, and the Eisach : the dramatised legends which formed so large a part of the amusement of the people, were prohibited : all pilgrimages to chapels or places of extraordinary sanctity forbidden. The convents and monasteries were confiscated, and their estates sold ; the church plate and holy vessels melted down and disposed of ; the royal property was all brought into the market ; even the ancient castle of the Tyrol in the Passeyrthal was not spared. New imposts were daily exacted without any consultation with the estates of the people ; specie became scarce, from the quantity of it which was drawn off to the royal treasury ; the Austrian notes were reduced to half their value ; and the feelings of the people were irritated almost to madness by the compulsory levy of men to serve in the ranks of their oppressors. It was even attempted to change the very name of the country ; and incorporate it with the Bavarian provinces ; and the use of their mother tongue was only to be permitted to the southern provinces for a few years.^{1*}

The existence and wide diffusion of these discontents were well known to the Austrian government, by whom a constant correspondence with the disaffected leaders had been maintained in secret, ever since that valuable province had been reft from their dominion. Sensible of the immense error committed in 1805, in stripping the country of regular troops, at the very time when the advance of the French to Vienna rendered it of the last importance that this great natural fortress should be strengthened on their flank, the cabinet of Vienna resolved not to fall a second time into the same mistake, and made every preparation for turning to the best account the martial qualities and excited feelings of the people. The Archduke

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Muller's
Gesch. 671.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 17.
Introd.
Barth. 24, 32.

22.
Preparations
of Austria to
take advantage
of this
discontent.

* Beauharnais, by an order dated *Moscow*, September 24, 1812, only permitted to some of the southern districts the use of their mother-tongue for six years longer.—*Quarterly Review*, xvii. 351. The date is singular and ominous. Napoleon afterwards was well aware how much the Tyrolese revolt was owing to the mismanagement of the Bavarians, and said to Count Bubna, "The Bavarians did not know how to govern the Tyrolese, and were unworthy to rule that noble country."—*Gesch. AND. HOFER*, 16. In truth, however, it was the magnitude and weight of his own exactions, in men and money, from that subject power, which drove the cabinet of Munich to the severe measures which had so powerful an effect in bringing about the insurrection.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

John, who commanded the army destined for the Italian campaign, then stationed at Villach and Klagenfurth, had made frequent excursions in former years through the Tyrol; and in the course of his rambles had become as much attached to these spirited mountaineers as they had acquired confidence in his patriotism and ardour. An active correspondence was carried on between the Archduke and the Tyrolese leaders, from the moment that war had been resolved on by the cabinet of Vienna, till it actually broke out. But although that accomplished prince was thus in a great degree instrumental in producing the general insurrection in the province which afterwards took place, yet he was fated never to return to it till the contest was over, nor to take part in a struggle in which he would willingly have risked his fortune and his life.¹

¹ Geschl. A.
Hofer, 19.
Ingli's
Tyrol, ii. 163,
164. Barth.
52, 54.

23.
Military
description
of the
country.

The Tyrol, notwithstanding its rugged aspect, is, in a military or strategetical point of view, a very simple country. There are very few practicable roads. The great chain of mountains which forms the southern barrier of the valley of the Inn, and which, beginning with the snowy peaks of the Orteler-Spitz, stretches through the Gefron to the huge mass of the Gross Glockner, is traversed only by one road, which from time immemorial has formed the chief means of communication between Germany and Italy. Setting out from Munich, it crosses the northern barrier of the Innthal by the gorge of Scharnitz; descends to Innspruck, and after crossing the southern bulwarks of the valley by the pass of the Brenner, descends the course of the Eisach to Sterzing, Brixen, Botzen, Trent, and Roveredo, below which it emerges at Verona into the Italian plains. From Trent branch two lateral roads: the first, after surmounting an inconsiderable ridge, descends by the waters of the Brenta, through the romantic defiles of the Val Sugana, to Primolano, and loses itself in the plains of Verona at Bassano; the second, after crossing the river Sarca, winds down by Chiesa and the lake of Idro, to the Brescian fields. From Botzen, or Bolsano, a great road ascends the whole course of the Adige, called, in its upper or German parts, the Etch, and penetrates into the cold and cheerless pastures of the Engadine, in Switzerland, at Nauders.

CHAP.

LVIII.

1809.

From Brixen branches off the great road to Carinthia and Klagenfurth, through the Pusterthal and down the valley of the Drave; and the route communicates with Salzburg by a cross-road which surmounts the great central ridge by St Michel and Tauern, till it reaches Rastadt and the waters of the Salza. Another great road crosses the Tyrol in its whole breadth, along the valley of the Inn; communicating on the west with Switzerland by Feldkirch and Bregentz; on the east passing by Rattenberg to Salzburg, Enns, and Vienna. The Brenner is thus by far the most important position in Tyrol, because whoever has the command of it, is the master of the only communication from Germany and the northern, to Italy and the southern Tyrol, and of the bridge of Laditch, at the junction of roads leading to Innspruck, Carinthia, and Verona. Rude fortifications were erected on the principal passes leading into the province on all sides from the adjoining states; but they were of no great strength, and incapable of holding out against a numerous and enterprising enemy. The true defence of the Tyrol consisted in its rugged and inaccessible surface, which rendered it for the most part wholly impassable for cavalry; in the number of woods and defensible positions which it contains; and, above all, in the indomitable spirit of its inhabitants.¹

¹ Pel. iii.
375, 382;
and Personal
Observation.

When the peasantry of the Tyrol, at the summons of Austria, took up arms, they had no fixed or authorised leaders; but several persons had acquired such consideration among them as naturally placed them at the head of affairs. The first of these was ANDREW HOFER, a native of St Leonard, in the valley of Passeyr; a name, like that of Tell and Wallace, now become immortal in the history of the world. Like his ancestors for many generations, he carried on the business of an innkeeper on his paternal property on the banks of the Adige; a profession which is one of the most respectable among that simple people, from the intercourse with strangers and the wealth with which it is commonly attended. He was born on the 22d November 1767, so that he was in the forty-second year of his age when the insurrection broke out. His frame was herculean, his shoulders broad, his strength surpassing; but, like most persons

24.
Hofer: His
birth and
descent.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

long habituated to climbing mountains, his carriage was somewhat impaired by a habitual stoop. In education and the means of improvement he had been superior to those of most persons in his rank of life, from his frequent intercourse with travellers, as well as the traffic which he carried on in wine and horses, in the course of which he had visited most of the principal cities on the southern side of the mountains, and become a fluent master of the Italian language, though in the low Venetian dialect. His dress was the common habit of the country, with some trifling variation: a large black hat with a broad brim, black ribbons, and a dark curling feather, a green jacket, red waistcoat, green braces, black leathern girdle, short black breeches of the same material, and red or black stockings. About his neck was always to be seen a crucifix and a silver medal of St George, to which was afterwards added a gold medal and chain, sent him by the Emperor. He never, however, obtained any rank in the Austrian army, and was indebted for his influence among his countrymen to his well-known probity of character and disinterested disposition, as well as the secret connexion which he maintained with the Archduke John, with whom he had formed an acquaintance in the course of that prince's scientific rambles in the Tyrol. This acquaintance led to his being chosen as a deputy from his native valley to confer with him at Brunecken, in November 1805, and Vienna in January 1809.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 44.
52. Barth.
42, 45.

25.
His character and disposition.

His talents and acquirements were of a superior order, as was sufficiently evinced by his having been selected by that discerning prince on occasions of such importance for the discharge of difficult duties; but his parts were solid rather than brilliant, and he evinced, in its merits equally as its defects, the true German character. Honest, sincere, and confiding, tenacious of custom, attached to antiquity, ignorant of present times, benevolent in disposition, he was at the same time pious and patriotic, and ready to lay down the last drop of his blood in defence of his religion and Emperor. It was easy to excite him to severe measures; but when their execution commenced, he was readily diverted from his purpose, and his native gentleness of disposition speedily caused the sterner mood to relent. His

attachment to the Catholic faith, and patriotic ardour, were unbounded; and the bare recital of a victory gained by Austria in former times, or allusion to the classical days of the Tyrol, a word in favour of the sacred person of the Emperor or the Archduke John, were sufficient to fill his eyes with tears. Though slow and sometimes vacillating in decision, he was capable, when he applied to a subject, of just discrimination; and when invested, during a few months in autumn 1809, with the entire government of the province, his measures were judicious to a degree that could hardly have been expected from his limited means of information. Fond of conviviality, sometimes addicted to intemperance, he was often carousing with his friends when the troops were engaged in action; and, though repeatedly victorious, and fearless in danger, he was only once under a hot fire during the war, though then he acted with the utmost gallantry. But his energy in conduct, and well-known patriotic ardour, obtained for him the attachment of his countrymen, whom he constantly led to victory; and the intrepidity of his demeanour in his last moments has secured for him an enduring place in the hearts of his countrymen.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 44,
52, 53.
Barth. 42,
47. Inglis,
ii. 165, 166.

Inferior to Hofer in general government, and unversed in the practice of political negotiation, SPECHBACHER was greatly his superior in the energy and conduct of actual warfare. He was a substantial yeoman, having inherited from his father a farm of some value in the village of Gnadenwald, in the Lower Innthal. Born in the year 1768, he was left an orphan at the age of seven years; and though his relations bestowed all the care upon his education which circumstances would admit, he showed little disposition for study or any sedentary pursuit. From an early age he was found from morning till night among the mountains, with his rifle over his shoulder, pursuing the roe or engaging the lammergeyer. As he advanced in years, these pursuits had such attractions for him, that, abandoning altogether his paternal estate, he associated with a band of hunters, who set the forest-laws at defiance, and ranged the mountains of the Upper and Lower Innthal, the Oetzthal, and the rugged forests of the Bavarian Tyrol.

26.
Of Spech-
bacher.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

By this wandering mode of life, as he afterwards himself admitted, he became acquainted with every pass and glen on the frontiers of Tyrol and Bavaria, from Feldkirch to Kufstein—a species of knowledge which was of essential importance in the conduct of the partisan warfare with which he was afterwards entrusted. At the same time it nourished in his mind that inextinguishable hatred towards Bavaria, which is felt more or less by every inhabitant of the northern Tyrol. His grandfather had distinguished himself in the war against the Bavarians, under Maximilian Emmanuel; “and when I was a child,” said Spechbacher in after days, “and listened to him as he told us the history of those times, I longed to have an opportunity of fighting against them as he had done.” He was diverted, however, from this dangerous course of life, by the impression produced by seeing one of his companions shot in a rencontre with a band of chasseurs; and returning at the age of twenty-eight to his native village, he married a young woman with some property, entered into a contract to supply the salt-works of Hall with wood, made himself master of the elements of education, and continued for twelve years to lead a laborious, inoffensive life, till the trumpet of war from Austria roused him to danger, and glory, and immortality.¹

¹ Barth. 36,
42. Inglis, ii.
179, 180.

27.
Of Joseph
Haspinger,
the friar.

JOSEPH HASPINGER was a Capuchin friar, and buried in the seclusion of a monastery till the war broke out. Though reckoned with justice one of the most formidable of the Tyrolese leaders, he carried with him into the field of battle only the spiritual weapons which he brought from the cloister. Clothed in his brown garment and rope girdle, he bore in his hand a large ebony crucifix, with which, it is said, in close combat, he sometimes exchanged blows with the enemy; and being endowed with prodigious strength, nearly as many wonders are recounted of his personal feats as miracles won by his faith and devotion. When a student in the faculty of theology, he had borne arms against the French, and won a silver medal, which he consecrated, on entering the order of St Francis, to the miraculous crucifix at Eppen near Bolsano.² He was distinguished by a flowing beard of a red colour, which gave him the surname

² Barth. i.
52, 54.
Inglis, ii.
180, 181.

of *Rothbard*: and often the massy crucifix and animated voice of the friar restored the combat, when his countrymen were sinking under numbers or fatigue.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

MARTIN TEIMER, though a brave and active leader, was not so celebrated as the other chiefs among the peasantry; but, from his military talents, skill in negotiation, and a certain degree of aristocratic favour which it induced, he received marks of distinction from the Emperor which the others never enjoyed, and was made a baron, with the cross of Maria Theresa, a dignity to which Hofer never attained. Teimer, however, was Hofer's superior in conduct and understanding, though, from not being so great a favourite with the people, he never possessed the same influence or celebrity. He was born on the 14th August 1778, at Schlanders, in the Vintschgau; and had a countenance in which the prominent forehead and sparkling eye clearly indicated the ascendant of talent. He served in the militia in the war of 1796, and raised himself by his abilities from the ranks to the station of major; having distinguished himself in several actions under Laudon in that year, and Bellegarde in 1799. In 1805, he was again made captain in the militia, and subsequently kept a shop at Klagenfurth. Like Hofer, his disposition was phlegmatic, and he was fond of conviviality; but, when roused by danger and placed at the head of his troops, he displayed equal courage and capacity, and contributed with the peasants of the Upper Innthal, whom he commanded, to some of the greatest successes of the war. It was only unfortunate that the favour of the Emperor occasioned a certain jealousy between him and Hofer, which in some degree dimmed the glory and impaired the usefulness of both. Baron Hormayer, one of the few native nobility who appeared in arms for their country, was early appointed by the Austrian cabinet governor of the province; and he showed his judgment by delegating his authority at a very early period of Hofer, by whom the movements of the peasants were practically directed till the close of the contest.¹

28.
Of Martin
Teimer, and
Baron Hor-
mayer.

¹ Barth. i.
82, 84.
Inglis, ii. 181.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 59,
60.

Such were the simple leaders under whose guidance the Tyrolese engaged in the formidable contest with the united power of France and Bavaria. It was from no ignorance of the perils which awaited them, but a brave

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

29.

Brave preparations of
the people
for the contest.

determination to disregard them, that they stood forth with such unanimous gallantry for their country's deliverance. In former wars, they had both witnessed and felt the weight of the French arms; in 1796, they had seen it roll past them in the Italian, in 1805, on the Bavarian plains; in 1797, their valleys had been penetrated from the south by Joubert,* in 1805, invaded from the north by Marshal Ney;† and they were well aware that the probabilities were, that if a serious reverse happened to the Imperial arms, the forces of the empire would, as on former occasions, be concentrated for the defence of the capital, and they would be left without external aid to make head against their numerous and disciplined enemies. Still they unanimously stood forth in the contest. Every man took leave of his family and his friends as those who might never meet again. They prepared themselves, after the manner of their country, for what they deemed a pious warfare, by the most solemn rites of their religion. The priest, in many parishes, assembled those who were to join the army, and animated them by his exhortations, and blessed those who might die in defence of their country. Every family assembled together, and prayed that the youths who were to leave it, might support their good name in the hour of danger, and die rather than dishonour their native land. In many instances even the sacrament was administered as for the last time in life, and accompanied with the solemnities which the Romish Church enjoins for the welfare of a departing soul. It was with such holy rites, and by such exercises of family devotion, that these brave men prepared themselves for the fearful warfare on which they were entering; and it was the spirit which they thus inhaled that supported them when they were left to their own resources, and enabled them, even amidst all the depression arising from the desertion of their allies, to present an undaunted front to the hostility of combined Europe.¹

¹ Personal
Information.
Barth. 86, 90.

All things being in readiness, and the Austrian troops under the Archduke Charles having crossed the Inn, the signal of insurrection was given by the Archduke John, in a spirited proclamation, from his headquarters at Klagen-

* *Ante*, chap. 23, § 15.

† *Ibid*, chap. 40, § 89.

furth, from whence the Marquis Chastellar set out, to take the command of the regular troops which were to enter the province to direct and support the operations of the peasants.* So unanimous, however, was the feeling with which the country was animated, that at the first intelligence of hostilities having commenced, the insurrection burst forth at once with uncontrollable fury in all quarters. The night of the 8th April was fixed for the event on which the destinies of the Tyrol were to depend. The signal agreed on was throwing sawdust into the Inn, which floated down, and was soon discovered and understood by the peasants. In addition to this, a plank with a little pennon affixed to it was launched in the Upper Innthal, and safely borne down the stream, amidst the throbbing anxieties of all who witnessed it. Bale-fires at the same time were lighted on a hundred hills; and many a ruined castle blazed with a long-unwonted glow. The peasantry of the Innthal were warned, besides, by women and children, who carried from house to house little balls of paper, upon which were written the words "*es ist zeit*," it is time. Roused by these various methods, the inhabitants every where rose on the 8th April as one man, and with their redoubted rifles on their shoulders descended every lateral glen and ravine,¹ till their accumulated force, gaining strength at every step as it

CHAP.
LVIII.

1800.

30.

Insurrection
in the Tyrol.
Its early and
complete
success.

April 8.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 77,
80. Inglis, ii.
168, 169.
Barth. 82,
84.

* The following proclamation was issued by the Archduke John:—"Tyrolese! I am come to keep the promise which I made to you on 4th November 1805, that the time would certainly come when I should have the joy of again finding myself among you. The peace of Presburg was the cause of all your subsequent disasters; it broke the tie which had connected Austria with the Tyrol for five hundred years; but even then the father of your country recollected his beloved children. He stipulated that the Tyrol should remain undivided, retain all its rights and liberties; in a word, 'that, in the same manner, and with the same rights and titles with which the Emperor had possessed it, it should be made over to Bavaria, and not otherwise.' The King of Bavaria solemnly promised to your deputies, 'that not an iota of the constitution should be changed;' that he honoured the grief which the Tyrolese felt for their ancient masters; but that he hoped, by constant care and attention, to make himself equally regretted by them. By the royal proclamation, 14th January 1806, it was declared, 'that the Tyrolese should not only retain their ancient rights and liberties, but their welfare should be promoted in every possible manner.' Where has been the promised attention to your interests; where the regard to the constitution you have so bravely defended? The clergy were their first object of attack: this was their plan, because they were the intrepid defenders of the throne and the altar. With bitter feelings, the Tyrolese beheld their abbeys and monasteries destroyed, the property of the churches stolen and carried away, their bishops and priests exiled, their churches profaned, their chalices sold to the Jews. Your knights and nobles, who, before the institution of the tributary law, were all your equals, and never a burden to the country, are all destroyed—your cities and courts of justice are ruined—your sons or brothers hurried away by a cruel conscription to fight the battles of the oppressor against Austria, their lawful master, or Spain, or Russia.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

31.
Successes in
the Puster-
thal.

April 9.

advanced, rolled in an impetuous torrent down the great valleys of the Inn, the Eisach, and the Adige.

Marquis Chastellar, with the regular troops under his command, about ten thousand strong, but very deficient in cavalry, was on the Klagenfurth frontier, to take advantage of, and support, these enthusiastic movements, and crossed the frontier at daybreak on the 9th. Their progress through the Pusterthal resembled rather the triumph of a victorious, than the march of an invading army. Mothers brought their children out to look at them; blind old men were led out of their cottages that they might hear and bless their gallant countrymen; all endeavoured to get near, that they might touch their clothes, or even kiss their horses. But more serious occupation awaited them. On arriving in the neighbourhood of St Lorenzo, in their way down towards Brixen, they found the peasants in considerable numbers already engaged with the enemy. The rising there had been precipitated two days before the time agreed on, by an attempt of the Bavarians on the important bridge at that place, which commanded the communication between Brunecken and the upper part of the valley. The peasants rose to prevent its destruction; and Wrede, aware of the importance of suppressing such a revolt in the outset, immediately marched to the spot, with two

The Bavarians have refused the bank-bills of the Austrians in payment; and when this occasioned to every man the loss of half his property, they overburdened the remainder with such oppressive taxes, that it has reduced many landholders to the rank of day-labourers. Even the name of your country is taken from you, and your valleys are called after the unmeaning names of rivers! To arms!—Rise, Tyrolese! to arms, for your God, your Emperor, your country! Why is the war a holy one?—why is it necessary and general? Because so great a power cannot be opposed alone, and therefore every one should assist in the cause; because the restoration of rights and liberties is to be gained, if attempted; because neither Germans nor Bohemians ought to be obliged to sell their blood as the blind instruments of an insatiable power—to be forced against their will to invade Russia or Spain, or oppress the less powerful kingdoms of the world. We have an enemy to oppose, whom hitherto nothing has been able to oppose; but, with unanimity, ardour, and firm perseverance, nothing is impossible. We possess this firmness and courage; this unanimity warms every heart. Austria has gone through many dangers, and emerged from them victorious. The present is the greatest of them all, but there never was the same unanimity. In a moment of such consequence to our faithful country, in the midst of such ardour for the holiest cause for which sword was ever drawn, I plant the Austrian eagle on the soil of the Tyrol. I know you—I recall you, as Duke Ferdinand did, nine hundred and thirty-three years ago—the prelates, the nobles, the citizens, the peasants, to the foot of the throne. Arms, and courage, to restore the rights you desire. Recollect the glorious days when you defeated Joubert at Spinger, Jenisir, and Botzen. I am no stranger to your mountains and valleys. I am confident you will fulfil the hopes of your fathers, and our highest expectations.—ARCHDUKE JOHN.”—See *Gesch. A. HOFER*, 64, 76.

thousand men and three guns, from Brixen. With these, however, he made no impression on the assembled peasants stationed in the woods and rocks; but being joined on the day following by a reinforcement of a thousand foot-soldiers and six hundred horse, he renewed his attack with better success; and the Tyrolese, unable to block up the main road against such formidable odds, were beginning to give way, when the arrival of seventy light horse, and a few companies of chasseurs, the advanced guard of Chastellar, who instantly charged with loud shouts, changed the fate of the day. The Tyrolese, suspending the combat, fell on their knees to return thanks, or embraced the Austrians with tears of joy; while the Bavarians, thunderstruck at this unexpected apparition, fled in disorder down the valley, and when they arrived at the tremendous bridge of Laditch* broke into two divisions, the first of which, under Bisson, hotly pursued by the peasants, ascended the Eisach towards Sterzing and the Brenner; while the second, two thousand strong, under General Lemoine, followed the course of that river down to Bolsano. Here, however, they were met by the landsturm, or *levée en masse*, of the valley of the Adige, which had descended to that place in great strength, from the upper part of the Etschthal; and though some forced their way through to Trent, the greater part, with the general himself, were made prisoners.¹

While these events were going on below Brixen, the Bavarian regiments which had ascended to Sterzing encountered Hofer with the landsturm of the Passeyrthal and the Vintschgau, on the plain of the Sterzinger Moos, near the town and castle of that name. The Bavarians advanced in good order, and with an intrepid air, over the open ground which lay between them and the enemy; but as they approached the Tyrolese, who were posted on rocks and in thickets around its outer circumference, they were staggered by the close and deadly fire of the rifles, and fell back in confusion. The guns were next brought up; but they could produce little impres-

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

April 10.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 79,
81. Barth.
92, 96. Pel.
iii. 86, 87.

32.
Defeat of the
the Bava-
rians by
Hofer at the
Sterzinger
Moos.
April 10.

* A well-known bridge, composed of a single arch between tremendous rocks, at the point where the road from Innsbruck over the Brenner, from Carinthia by the Pusterthal, and from Italy up the Eisach, unite.—*Gesch. A. Hofer*, p. 64, 78; and *Personal Observation*.

CHAP.

LVIII.

1809.

sion upon the enemy scattered among, and in great part concealed in, the broken ground and woods; and the gunners were soon laid prostrate by the unerring aim of the mountain sharpshooters. Encouraged by this success, the Tyrolese now burst from their covert, and rushing forward, like the La Vendée peasants, in loose array, but with desperate resolution, using their spears, halberts, and the but-ends of their muskets, fell with loud shouts upon the enemy. After a violent struggle of a few minutes' duration the Bavarians gave way, and, being enveloped on all sides, laid down their arms to the number of three hundred and ninety, besides two hundred and forty who were killed or wounded in this sanguinary combat. The column which succeeded, however, under Bisson and Wrede, contrived to force its way, by a circuitous route, up the pass of the Brenner; but it was grievously harassed in the defile of Lueg by the peasants, who broke down bridges and barricaded the highway by heaps of trees thrown across the road, and only penetrated through to the neighbourhood of Innspruck after sustaining a heavy loss. All these columns in their retreat committed the greatest excesses, burning houses, and massacring the inhabitants wherever they had it in their power; while the Austrian authorities exhibited, at the same time, the noble contrast of a proclamation issued expressly to restrain the feelings of revenge arising in the breasts of the people.¹*

¹ *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 81, 82. *Pel. iii.* 87. *Barth.* 98, 100.

33.
Capture of
Innspruck by
the peasants
of the Upper
Innthal.
April 11.

On the same day the peasantry of the Upper and Lower Innthal rose in arms; and so active were the exertions made that, early on the morning of the 11th, twenty thousand men, directed by Teimer, were assembled on the heights around Innspruck. In no condition to resist so formidable an assemblage, the Bavarians, who had only fifteen hundred men and a few guns in the

* "Tyroleans! you have proved yourselves worthy to be free, and of that constitution which the Bavarians promised to respect, but have violated. You have proved yourselves worthy of liberty: do not, therefore, give way to your indignation, and become ungovernable, but act with unanimity and coolness, determined to die or be free. To injure the feeble is contemptible: no real Tyrolese will allow himself to be accused of such a deed. To follow the example of those who have nothing to lose, who molest and plunder the peaceful and inoffensive, would inevitably sow the seeds of dissension among us, and cause our ruin. Without discipline, order, and obedience, nothing will prosper: in the name of the Emperor and the Archduke, I will punish every one who disobeys his orders, and treat every one who commits excesses as an enemy to his country.—JOSEPH BARON NORMAYER."—See *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 87, 88.

place, withdrew into the town. But there they were speedily assailed by a furious crowd of peasants, who carried successively the external barriers, the bridge of the Inn, the artillery, and finally penetrated into the principal square, shouting out, "Long live the Emperor Francis! Down with the Bavarians!" They soon made themselves masters of the place. A frightful scene ensued. The Bavarians in some places surrendered, and begged for quarter, in others continued the combat with undaunted resolution; and in the *mêlée* several bloody deeds were committed, which, in their cooler moments, the Tyrolese would have been the first to condemn. General Kinkel, after making a brave resistance, was struck down; Colonel Dietfurth, who atoned for his former conduct by the gallantry of his last hours, desperately wounded, was made prisoner, and soon after died; and the whole garrison of Innsbruck, consisting of one entire regiment, four guns, a few cavalry, and several depots of battalions, were either taken or slain.¹

¹ *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 88, 91. *Barth.* 100, 106. *Pel. iii.* 87, 88.

An event here took place which strongly marked the peculiar character of the warfare which had commenced. Dietfurth, the Bavarian colonel, had made himself peculiarly obnoxious in the province, by the severity of his public, and licentiousness of his private conduct, as well as the contemptuous expressions which he had used with reference to the people.* As he lay half fainting from loss of blood in the guard-house of Innsbruck, he asked who had been the leader of the peasants. "No one," they replied: "we fought equally for God, the Emperor, and our native country."—"That is surprising," said Dietfurth, "for I saw him frequently pass me on a white horse." The report of this incident produced an extraordinary impression upon the people, by whom it was universally believed, thenceforth, that St James, the patron of the town of Innsbruck, and who was always represented, in the battles with the Moors, mounted on a white horse, had combated at their head. The cavalry which escaped from Innsbruck took refuge in a convent near the bridge of Volders; but Spechbacher, having

34. Striking incident which occurred on the capture of Innsbruck.

* He had publicly boasted at Munich, "that with his regiment and two squadrons he would disperse the ragged mob," and had been promoted instead of reproved for his oppressive and licentious conduct.—*Gesch. A. Hofer*, 90, 91.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

April 12.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 92.
93. Inglis, ii.
169, 172.
Barth. 104,
106.

35.
Arrival, de-
feat, and
surrender of
Bisson's
division from
Sterzing.
April 12.

assembled a body of insurgents from the Lower Innthal, burst open the gates on the day following by means of an immense fir-tree, which was rolled up on wheels to the massy portal by fifty of his strongest peasants, and every man was made prisoner. The Tyrolese, after these successes, set no bounds to their rejoicings: the great Imperial eagle was taken down from the tomb of Maximilian in the High Church of Innspruck, decorated with red ribbons, and carried amid deafening acclamations through the street, the peasants flocking in crowds to gaze at and kiss it; while the pictures of the Archduke John and the Emperor were placed on a triumphal arch, surrounded by candles kept constantly burning — every one that passed stopping an instant, bending the knee, and exclaiming, “Long live the Emperor!”¹

Soon, however, in the midst of these rejoicings, the Tyrolese were called to more serious duties. The victorious peasants, who had fallen asleep on the streets or in the orchards around the town, were alarmed at three o'clock on the morning of the 12th, by the intelligence that the enemy were approaching. They proved to be the division of Bisson, which, having forced its way through the pass of Lueg and over the Brenner, from Sterzing and the valley of the Eisach, had reached Mount Ysel and the neighbourhood of the Abbey of Wilten, on its way to the northern Tyrol and Bavaria. The gates were immediately barricaded with casks, waggons, carts, and every thing that could be found for that purpose, and the approaches to the city filled with armed men, ready to give the enemy a warm reception. But the Bavarians, who were descending the Brenner, were in still greater consternation than their opponents at the circumstances of their situation. With difficulty, and constantly harassed by a cloud of insurgents in their rear, they had reached the heights of Mount Ysel, overhanging the capital; and now they found Innspruck, their sole point of retreat, where they expected to obtain succour, rest, and security, occupied by twenty thousand peasants. General Kinkel, who perceived the hopelessness of their situation, wrote to General Bisson, urging him to send some confidential person into the town who might report the state of affairs; and, in

pursuance of this advice, Wrede, with a large escort, soon made his appearance, and the whole were immediately taken into custody. Wrede was detained, the remainder being allowed to return to their comrades. The situation of the French and Bavarians was now almost desperate. Chastellar, with a body of armed peasants, as well as a few regular troops, was descending the Brenner, and already menaced their rear; while the rocks and thickets in their front and flanks were occupied by the insurgents of the Innthal, who in great strength obstructed their advance. After some unsuccessful parleying, in the course of which Bisson expressed the most dread of the vengeance of Napoleon if he laid down his arms, the struggle began, and a close discharge, admirably directed, thinned the ranks of the French grenadiers; while the shouts with which the mountains resounded on all sides were so tremendous that they were completely panic-struck, and compelled their commander to consent to an unconditional surrender. Bisson laid down his arms with all his troops, including the division at Schwatz, which was to be delivered up to the Austrians there. Nearly three thousand men, on this occasion, fell in all into the hands of the enemy.^{1*}

The only post of importance in the Tyrol now occupied by the Bavarians, was Hall in the lower Innthal, and it soon yielded to the enterprise and skill of Spechbacher. The women and children who remained on the left bank of the Inn, lighted fires on all the hills bounding the valley on that side; and this stratagem induced the Bavarian garrison to believe, that if the town were attacked at all, it would be from the northern quarter. Thither, accordingly, they all crowded, carefully manning the ramparts and watching the approaches. Meanwhile, Spechbacher with his men silently advanced in ambush to the other side, and, when the drawbridge was let

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 97,
Pelet, iii. 90.
99. Barth.
106, 108.

36.
Capture of
Hall by
Spechbacher.

* Upon signing this capitulation Bisson exclaimed, "This day will be my last, the grave of my honour and military reputation. Never will Napoleon believe that this disaster might not have been averted; even were I merely unfortunate, he would impute it to me as a crime." In this, however, the French general was mistaken: it was for the interest of the Emperor to conceal this check, and the lustre of subsequent events enabled him to accomplish this object. Bisson was not disgraced; and, by a singular revolution of fortune, was the governor of Mantua when Hofer was shot in that fortress.—*Gesch. A. Hofer*, 97, 98.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Barth. 116,
120. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
101, 102.

37.
Results of
these suc-
En-
tire deliver-
ance of the
Tyrol.

down and the gate opened, upon the bell ringing for matins, they rushed in, overpowered the guard, and made themselves masters of the town. The Bavarian prisoners, about four hundred in number, were immediately marched off under an escort consisting chiefly of women. Considering this as a studied insult, the captives were exceedingly indignant; but, in truth, it was the result of necessity—the whole male population having been marched off towards Innsbruck; and, from a similar cause, a similar service was often assigned to the female sex during the war.¹

Thus did the Tyrolese, in one week after the insurrection broke out, by means solely of their own valour and patriotism, aided by the natural strength of the country, entirely deliver the province from the enemy; recover all the fortresses, except Kufstein, which were in the hands of their oppressors; and destroy above ten thousand regular troops of the enemy, of whom six thousand were made prisoners! These extraordinary successes, too, were gained almost exclusively by the unaided efforts of the people; for though the Austrian regulars came up most opportunely in the first contest, at the bridge of San Lorenzo, yet they had no share in the subsequent triumphs, which were achieved long before their arrival at the scene of action, by the assembled peasantry: a memorable instance of what may be effected by unanimity and vigour, even in opposition to a formidable military force. The effect of these victories was to liberate the southern as well as northern Tyrol; for the French troops were so much discouraged by their reverses that they evacuated both Trent and Roveredo, and fell back to the neighbourhood of Verona. The insurrection gained all the Italian Tyrol; and it even spread into the valleys of the Oglio and the Mella, where the people were highly discontented with the government of the kingdom of Italy. Numerous bodies of partisans appeared to the north, in the Bavarian plains and the Swabian hills, and on the south, in the neighbourhood of Brescia and Verona: they communicated with the Archduke John, whose victory at Sacile excited extraordinary enthusiasm, by the vale of the Piave; and symptoms of revolt were already manifesting themselves

in all the southern valleys of the Alps, as far as Piedmont, where the people only waited for the Austrian standards to cross the Adige to break out into open insurrection. Nor was it the least honourable circumstance in this glorious contest, that though the population were strongly excited by a long course of previous injuries, and almost entirely destitute of regular officers to restrain their impetuosity, they were as much distinguished by their humanity as their valour, and, with a few exceptions, originating in the heat of assault, conducted their hostilities with at least as much moderation as disciplined soldiers.¹

Meanwhile Napoleon, who was exceedingly irritated at this unlooked-for series of disasters in the Tyrol, and, notwithstanding all his power, was not able altogether to conceal them even from his own subjects, let his exasperation exhale in furious invectives against the Marquis Chastellar, to whom he ascribed both the exciting of the revolt in the Tyrol, and the cruelties which he alleged had been committed by the peasantry. The latter charge, founded upon some isolated acts of revenge perpetrated in the assault of Innspruck, was wholly unfounded as against the Tyrolese in general; and against Chastellar, in particular, was in an especial manner false, as at the time when the acts complained of took place on the banks of the Inn, he was still at Brixen, sixty miles distant, to the south of the Brenner, and even ignorant of the whole operations to the north of that mountain. But the sentence of outlawry pronounced by Napoleon against Chastellar and Hormayer, both of whom were ordered to be delivered to a military commission as soon as taken, and shot within twenty-four hours, was of a piece with his invariable policy in such circumstances. Whenever a disaster had occurred to his arms, or an event had taken place likely to rouse an enthusiastic moral feeling against his government, he instantly propagated some falsehood against its authors, or exaggerated some trifling incident into a mighty enormity; and, by the vehement abuse of the persons by whom his power had thus been assailed, often succeeded, at least with his own benighted subjects, in withdrawing public attention altogether from the calamities sustained by himself, or the virtues displayed by others, which he sought to conceal.²

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Pel. iii. 91,
95. Gesch. A.
Hofer, 100,
101, 102.

38.
Menaces of
Napoleon
against Chas-
tellar in the
Tyrol.

May 5.

² Pel. iii. 95,
96. Gesch. A.
Hofer, 105,
106.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

39.

Actions in
the Southern
Tyrol, which
is evacuated
by the
French.

April 23.

April 24.

² Pel. iii. 169,

171. Barth.

132, 136.

Gesch. A.

Hofer, 114,

121, 128, 136.

40.

Actions on
the Salzburg
frontier.

April 29.

Chastellar, for a fortnight after the Tyrol was evacuated by the enemy, laboured assiduously to give something like military consistence to the tumultuary efforts of the peasantry. He succeeded in equipping a small body of cavalry, to whom he gave arms—a species of force of which these poor mountaineers stood much in need—and organised several battalions of excellent foot-soldiers. Having put matters in a train to the north of the mountains, he recrossed the Brenner with his regular troops, and, descending the valley of the Eisach and Adige, came up with the enemy in front of the famous defile of La Pietra, between Roveredo and Trent. The French, under Baraguay D'Hilliers, six thousand strong, were there posted in a well-known position of uncommon strength, and held firm, to give the main body of their army under Eugene time to retreat in order to the banks of the Adige, after the disastrous battle of Sacile. The Austrians, having imprudently commenced an attack when worn out with the fatigue of a long march, were worsted and driven out of the defile with loss ; but the French, notwithstanding, continued their retreat to the neighbourhood of Verona, and Chastellar took up his quarters in Roveredo. From thence, however, he was soon recalled to the north of the Brenner, by the threatened invasion of the province by the French troops after the disastrous battles in Bavaria.¹

Jellachich, as already noticed,* after the defeat of Hiller at Landshut, had retired from Munich towards Salzburg on the 24th April. Thither he was followed by Marshal Lefebvre with his corps, consisting chiefly of Bavarians. The Austrian general took up a strong position in front of Salzburg, where he endeavoured to arrest the advance of the French troops ; but the numbers of the French were so superior that he was unable to effect his object, and was driven into the town with the loss of several hundred prisoners and three guns. The victors entered pell-mell with the vanquished ; and Jellachich, continuing his retreat in great disorder to the south, ascended the valley of the Salza, and crossing the mountains behind Rastadt, made the best of his way towards Villach and Carinthia, abandoning the eastern districts of the Tyrol to their fate.

* *Ante*, Chap. lvii. § 30.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

Thither Lefebvre shortly after bent his steps, having remained in Salzburg only long enough to put the town in a sufficient posture of defence, and establish the magazines necessary for the operations in that quarter. On the 10th May he broke up and advanced to Reichenhall, a considerable burgh still in the open country, but within a mile of the mountains, which there rise in awful majesty abrupt and sheer from the plain, to all appearance impervious by man. On the day following, the French in great force advanced to the entrance of the passes. Notwithstanding their immense superiority of numbers, such was the natural strength of the defiles,* that it is doubtful if they would have succeeded in making good their entrance had the Tyrolese guards been all at their stations. But it was Ascension-day, and a large proportion of the peasants were absent at church, or engaged in their devotions or sports on the holiday : so that the contest fell on four hundred regular troops, and a few companies of sharpshooters, who, notwithstanding, for several hours kept at bay a whole Bavarian division. At length the barricades and formidable defences in the tremendous defile of Strub were forced, and the Tyrolese driven, combating all the way up the frightful gorges of the Achen, back to the neighbourhood of Wörgl. There they stood firm, as they were reinforced by Chastellar with a few thousand regular troops ; but on the same day intelligence arrived that the passes of the Inn, at the entrance of the plain,¹ had been forced by Deroy

¹ Pel. iii. 99,
100. Barth.
138, 142.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 157,
159.

* No defiles in Europe exceed in romantic interest those which lie between Reichenhall and Wörgl, through which the high-road passes. Winding by the side of torrents, through narrow ravines shut in by walls of rock, which barely leave room for a carriage-way ; often blown out of the mass, between precipices a thousand or fifteen hundred feet high ; scaling heights to appearance almost perpendicular, by an angle of elevation unknown in any other European road : descending break-neck declivities by the side of roaring streams, in the midst of forests of matchless beauty, surmounted by romantic peaks, starting up in endless fantastic forms, six or seven thousand feet in height, they possess a degree of interest to the lover of the picturesque exceeding even the far-famed passage of the Simplon. The most ardent imagination, furnished with the widest recollection of romantic scenery, can figure nothing approaching to the sublimity of the defile of Strub, where the road, apparently blocked up by a wall of rock two thousand feet in height, is cut through a narrow passage beside the roaring stream, and then winds its devious way amidst overhanging forests of dark pine, intermingled with huge crags of brilliant colours, and surmounted by bare peaks silvered with snow. The grandest points in the vast amphitheatre of the Alps, are the valley of Berchtesgaden ; the König See and defile of Strub, near Salzburg ; the Via Mala in the Grisons ; the defile of Gondo on the route of the Simplon ; the valley of Gasteren, and Eschinen in the vale of Kandersteg, near the Gemmi ; and the approach to the Grande Chartreuse in Savoy.—*Personal Observation.*

CHAP.

LVIII.

1809.

41.
 Combats at
 Feuer Singer
 and Wörgl.

with another Bavarian division, the Thierseebach crossed, and that the enemy's outposts had already appeared before Kufstein.

Finding himself thus threatened both from the side of Salzburg and Kufstein, Chastellar, who had only three thousand regular troops at his disposal, the remainder being a body of as many Tyrolese peasants, without any other discipline than what they had acquired in their native valleys, resolved to take the initiative, and combat Lefebvre in the first instance, before Deroÿ came up. With this view he occupied the defile of Feuer Singer, which lies between the ravines of the Achen and the pass of Strub, and strengthened the gorge with some rude field-works: but the impetuous attack of the Bavarians, flushed with the victory of Abensberg, overcame every obstacle, and the Austrians, after a bloody struggle, were driven back at the point of the bayonet to their reserves, posted at the important position of Wörgl. Stationed there behind a rivulet, in a situation which commanded the junction of the roads from Kufstein and Salzburg, and barred the only access to Innspruck, Chastellar stood firm, and, with four thousand regular troops and six thousand peasants, gave battle to the enemy. The open and desolate plain of Wörgl, however, was unfavourable to the operations of the new levies, who were dispirited at finding themselves driven into the open country from the fastnesses which they had deemed impregnable; and their total want of cavalry rendered them incapable of opposing with success the numerous and powerful squadrons of Linange. The Bavarians were greatly superior in number, being eighteen thousand strong, with thirty pieces of cannon, while the united Tyrolese and Austrians hardly amounted to half that number. After a short combat, the Austrians were entirely defeated, with the loss of all their baggage, ammunition, and guns, seven in number; which, with five hundred prisoners, fell into the hands of the enemy.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
 Hofer, 157,
 159. Pel. iii.
 101, 102.
 Barth. 142,
 148.

Nothing now remained to prevent the conquest of the Lower Innthal by the Bavarians; and if they had pushed on with vigour and rapidity, they might have struck a seasonable terror into the insurgents by the capture of their principal leaders and magazines at Innspruck. But

they advanced so tardily, that they gave the Tyrolese time to recover from their consternation ; reinforcements poured down from the Brenner, and the mountains of Scharnitz, to the fugitives from Wörgl ; and Chastellar, who narrowly escaped being made prisoner by the enemy, met with Hormayer at Steinach, and concerted measures for future operations. Slowly moving up the valley of the Inn, Lefebvre found the resistance of the people increase with every step he advanced ; Schwatz was only carried by assault after a desperate resistance, and burned, in the struggle, to the ground. Frightful atrocities marked the steps of the invaders ; the Bavarians wreaking their vengeance on the unhappy peasants, for the real or imaginary injuries they had received, by the perpetration of the most revolting military cruelties. Old men, women, and children, were massacred indiscriminately ; and every village from which a shot had issued was committed to the flames. Meanwhile Chastellar, who had been strongly irritated at the Tyrolese, on account of the furious conduct of some drunken peasants at Hall, who tried to pull him from his horse from indignation at his retreat, had repassed the Brenner, and the Innthal was again thrown back upon its own resources. On the 19th, Lefebvre appeared before Innsbruck, which submitted without resistance ; the minds even of the heroic leaders of the insurrection being stunned by the misfortunes which were now accumulating around them on all sides ; and justly considering a prolonged resistance hopeless after Vienna had opened its gates to the enemy, and the Archduke John had evacuated the Carinthian mountains.¹

The Archduke John, on occasion of his first disaster on the Piave, on 30th April, wrote to Hofer in these words :—"Do not allow the misfortunes of Germany to make you uneasy : we have done our duty, and will defend the Tyrol, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and Salzburg, to the last drop of our blood. It is in that fortress, aided by our brave mountaineers, that we ought to conquer or die, for the glory of our ancestors and our arms. *I shall not retire to Hungary.*" And on 3d May he wrote to Chastellar :—"Our misfortunes in Germany have obliged me to abandon the offensive, and to direct

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

42.

Innsbruck
taken by the
Bavarians.
May 19.

May 14.

May 19.

¹ Moniteur,
June 8, 1809.
Pel. iii. 104,
106. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
158, 165.

43.
The Arch-
duke John
violates his
orders and
promises, and
evacuates
Styria and
the Tyrol.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

my attention to the provinces, which are of so much consequence to Austria. Do not be alarmed : the Tyrol shall never be forsaken : *I will defend it and the interior of Austria to the last extremity.*" It would have been well for the Archduke John and the Austrian monarchy if he had adhered to these resolutions, and thrown himself into the Tyrol, when obliged to evacuate Italy by the disasters in Bavaria ; as in that case he would have been in a situation to have taken part in the important and probably decisive operation projected by the Archduke Charles at Lintz, on the 22d May, and protected the interior of the monarchy as effectually as under the ramparts of Vienna. Instead of this, he at once disobeyed his brother's orders and those of the Aulic Council, and violated his own promises, by retiring into Hungary, and thereby not only caused the whole fruits of the battle of Aspern to be lost, but saved Napoleon from a disastrous retreat.¹

¹ Gesch. A. Hofer, 140, 141.

44.
Desperate
state of affairs
in the Tyrol,
and firmness
of the peasantry.

Affairs in the Tyrol were now wellnigh desperate ; for, at the very time when these disasters were accumulating on the north of the Brenner, a strong French force of fifteen thousand men, under Baraguay D'Hilliers and Rusca, detached by Eugene after his victory on the Piave, to which the peasants, now stripped of the regular troops for the defence of the Innthal, had nothing to oppose, was rapidly advancing up the valley of the Adige, and had already occupied Roveredo and menaced Trent. Chastellar, despairing of success, had made arrangements for leaving the country ; and Hormayer, who, with unshaken resolution, was still endeavouring to rouse the peasantry in the lateral valleys of the Innthal, found them in most places indignant at the retreat of the Austrians, and fast returning to their homes. General Buol, indeed, with two thousand five hundred men and six guns, still occupied the crest of the Brenner ; but he was in a wretched condition, starving with cold, destitute of ammunition, and almost without provisions. In these mournful circumstances, it was the invincible tenacity of the peasantry in the upper Innthal, and elevated parts of the Brenner and Scharnitz ranges of mountains, which restored the fortunes of the campaign. Eisensticken, Hofer's aide-de-camp, Spechbacher, and Friar Haspinger, vied with each other in the indefatigable ardour with which they roused

the people. The first fell himself on his knees to General Buol, when he was preparing to abandon the Brenner, and by the vehemence of his entreaties prevailed upon him to keep his ground in that important position. Hofer, who in the first instance was thrown into the deepest dejection by the misfortunes impending over his country, and rendered incapable of active exertion, was roused by their example to nobler efforts; and appearing at the head of his peasants, forced the Passeyrthal, and commenced a fierce attack on the Bavarians at Presburg, near Mount Ysel, which, although unsuccessful, struck May 25. no small alarm into the enemy, from the gallantry with which it was conducted. This combat renewed the war-like ardour of the Tyrolese, who flocked from all quarters in great strength to the general place of gathering on Mount Ysel, which ancient prophesy led them to expect was to be the theatre of great events to the Tyrol; while Lefebvre, who deemed the affairs of the provinces settled by the capture of Innspruck, and submission of the authorities in that place, had set out for Salzburg, leaving Deroy at the capital, with eight thousand foot, eight hundred horse, and twenty pieces of cannon.¹

The forces engaged on the 29th May, on the heights of Mount Ysel, were, in numerical strength, very unequal: the Tyrolese having nine hundred infantry, seventy horse, and five guns of the Austrian troops, besides a motley assemblage of peasants, to the number of twenty thousand men—individually brave and skilled in the use of arms, but altogether undisciplined and unaccustomed to act together in large masses; while the Bavarians had only eight thousand foot, eight hundred horse, and twenty-five guns. The numerical superiority, however, of the former was fully counterbalanced by their great inferiority in discipline, cavalry, and artillery; so that the real military strength of both sides might be considered as very nearly equal. Hofer did his best to compensate his weakness in cavalry, by stationing his followers, as much as possible, in the wooded heights at the foot of Mount Ysel, where horsemen could not penetrate; but the town was not to be carried by such a blockade, and the impetuous spirit of the peasantry led them to demand an immediate assault.² Their spirits had been elevated to

^{45.}
Preparations
for the battle
of Innspruck.
May 28.

² Pel. iv. 41.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 231.
232. Schoell.
Hist. des
Trait. de
Paix, 9, 257.
Erz. Johan.
Feldzug
1809, 162.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

46.
Battle of
Innsbruck,
and total
defeat of the
Bavarians.
May 20.

the highest degree by the intelligence of the battle of Aspern, which had been communicated with extraordinary rapidity to the most secluded valleys, and by a proclamation issued by the Emperor Francis the day after that glorious event, dated Breitenlee, 23d May, in which he solemnly engaged "never to lay down his arms till the Tyrol was reunited to the Austrian monarchy."*

The attack on Innsbruck was combined with more military skill than could have been anticipated from the untutored character of the leaders by whom it was conducted. Spechbacher, who, in spite of the utmost vigilance of the Bavarians, had contrived to warn the peasants on both sides of the Inn of the approaching gathering,† menaced the bridge of Hall, and the line of retreat down the valley of the Inn from the northern side, while Colonel Reissenfels co-operated in the same direction from the southern valleys, by a descent along

* Hofer addressed the following characteristic letter to the inhabitants of the Upper Inntal:—"Dear brethren of the Upper Inntal! For God, the Emperor, and our Fatherland! To-morrow, early in the morning, is fixed for the attack. With the help of the blessed Virgin we will seize and destroy the Bavarians, and confide ourselves to the beloved Jesus. Come to our assistance: but if you fancy yourselves wiser than Divine Providence, we will do without you.—ANDREW HOFER."—*Gesch. A. HOFER*, 238.

The proclamation of the Emperor Francis to the Tyrolese, dated 1st June 1809, bore—"Operations at all points are about to recommence; I will send you a helping hand. We will combat together for our country and our religion. Your noble conduct has sunk deep into my heart: *I will never abandon you*. The Archduke John will speedily be amongst you, and put himself at your head."—ERZH. JOHAN. *Feldzug in Jahre 1809*, 162.

† "All the passages over the Inn, and especially the bridge of Hall, were vigilantly guarded by the Bavarian posts, who justly deemed it a matter of especial importance to prevent any joint measure being concerted on the opposite sides of the river. Spechbacher, however, undertook the perilous mission of opening up a communication between the northern and southern valleys. Accompanied by his trusty companions, George Zoppel and Simon Leelner, and a young peasant girl, Zoppel's servant, he set out on the evening of Whit-Monday. In the evening they encountered a body of a hundred Bavarian dragoons: Spechbacher and his companions concealed themselves behind some pine-trees at the foot of a cliff, fired on the party from their ambush, and immediately scaling the precipice, loaded and fired again. The Bavarians, conceiving they were attacked by a numerous body of sharpshooters, fled, and left the passage open. Spechbacher met with Hofer accordingly, and a general assemblage around Innsbruck was arranged for the 28th May. On his return, however, fresh difficulties were encountered: the bridge of Hall and all the points of transit were vigilantly guarded, and every person rigorously searched who attempted to pass from one side to the other. In this perplexity he was relieved by the inventive genius of his trusty companion, George Zoppel, and his servant maid. The girl first crossed the bridge: and, as nothing suspicious was found upon her, she was allowed to pass. Then George Zoppel presented himself; after him came Spechbacher's great poodle-dog, in whose woolly tail the despatches were concealed; and, while the sentinels were busy employed in searching Zoppel's pockets, the dog, obedient to the call of the servant-maid, brushed past the soldiers and ran up to her. Spechbacher came last; but being unknown, and nothing found upon him, he was allowed to pass."—BARTHOLODY, *Krieg* 1809, 168, 172.

the right bank of the Sill and an attack on the castle of Ambras. Hofer descended with all the strength of the southern and central valleys of Tyrol, from the Brenner and Mount Ysel; while Teimer, with a small band of six hundred resolute followers, was sent by a circuitous route to the heights of Hottingen on the north of the town, and in the rear of the Bavarians, to make his appearance in the middle of the action, and spread terror among the enemy, from the belief that they were beset on all sides. Thus the battle consisted of a variety of detached combats in different directions around Innsbruck, contemporary with the now furious struggle at the foot of Mount Ysel, between the main body of the combatants on either side. By daybreak, Spechbacher was at the post assigned to him, and amidst loud shouts, carried the important bridge of Hall with such vigour, that it gained for him the surname of "*Der Feuer-Teufel*," the *Fire-Devil*. The castle of Ambras soon after yielded to the impetuous assault of Reissenfels, and the whole right bank of the Sill was cleared of the enemy; but they long held their ground at the bridge of Passberg, commanding the passage of that torrent by the great road on the south of the Inn. From this position, however, they were at length driven about noon, by the more skilled attacks of Captain Dobrawa; and the left flank of the enemy being thus completely turned, and their retreat down the Inn cut off, they were thrown back in great disorder to the village and abbey of Wilten.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 240,
245. Barth.
192, 196.
Inglist, ii. 183.

While affairs were proceeding so prosperously on the east of Innsbruck, a more dubious conflict was raging in the centre and on the left, at the foot of Mount Ysel. Haspinger, with a huge wooden cross in his hand, here led on the attack, and animated his followers not less by his example, than by the assurances of Divine protection which he held forth. He was followed by Colonel Ertell with the most disciplined part of the Tyrolese, two thousand strong; while Hofer, with the peasants of the Passeyrthal, descended from Mount Ysel by the great road direct upon Innsbruck; his brave but tumultuous array shouting aloud—"For God, the Emperor, and our Fatherland!"* The outposts of the enemy were speedily

47.
Bloody action
of Hofer and
Haspinger.

* "Für Gott, den Kaiser, und Vaterland."

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

driven in by the superior numbers and unerring aim of the Tyrolese riflemen; but when they advanced out of the woods and broken knolls to the open ground in front of the town, where the Bavarians were drawn up in line in admirable order, the usual superiority of discipline and organisation became apparent, and the peasants were driven back. Rallying, however, among the rocks and thickets, they again poured down a destructive shower of balls on their assailants, and both sides maintained the contest with the most undaunted resolution. The ammunition of the Tyrolese, with which they were very scantily provided, at length began to fail; they were compelled to reserve their fire till it could be given with decisive effect; and balls could be obtained only by the women and children,* who picked up those of the enemy which fell in the rear of the combatants. In this anxious moment, Teimer's bands appeared on the heights of Hottingen in the rear of the Bavarians; and though their attack was restrained by the troops which Deroy sent to oppose his progress, yet this circumstance, joined to the disastrous accounts of the progress of Spechbacher on the left, determined Deroy to retreat. At four in the afternoon, a sort of suspension of arms was agreed to by the leaders on both sides; and as soon as it was dark the Bavarians commenced their retreat by the left bank of the Inn, and, evacuating Innspruck and the great road, withdrew by mountain paths amidst rocks and forests to Kufstein, from whence they continued their march to Rosenheim in the Bavarian plains.¹

In this battle the Bavarians lost four thousand men; but, what was of still more importance, they were deprived by it of the possession of the whole of the Tyrol. Intoxicated with joy, the peasants crowded into Innspruck in such numbers, that they were an oppression

¹ *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 238, 249. *Barth*, 202, 212. *Inglis*, ii. 183, 184. *Pel*, iv. 34, 36. *Bavarian Account of the battle*, *Moniteur*, June 22, 1809.

* *Spechbacher* was attended in the battle by his little son *Andrew*, a boy of ten years of age. When the fire grew warm, his father ordered him to quit the field: the boy did so, but soon returned, and was again at his side. Irritated at this disobedience, *Spechbacher* struck him, and ordered him to withdraw. He did so; but, without retiring out of reach of the shot, observed where they struck the ground, and bringing his hat full of them next morning to his father, begged that they might be used against the enemy. The wounded in this battle refused to be carried from the field, lest those who conveyed them to a place of safety should weaken the combatants; and numbers of women throughout the day were to be seen behind the ranks, bringing up ammunition, water, and refreshments to the wearied men.—*See BARTH. Krieg* 1809, 204-216; *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 248.

rather than a source of strength to the Austrian commanders, who were totally destitute of ammunition or military arms for the ardent multitude. A proclamation was immediately issued, calling on all persons to bring forth their little stores of money and powder for the use of the troops; and considerable supplies were obtained in this way, though in no degree proportionate to the wants of the people. The desperate struggle in the heart of Austria required every sabre and bayonet around the walls of Vienna; the intervening country was all in the hands of the enemy, and not a dollar or a gun could be obtained from that quarter. Such, however, was the native vigour of the inhabitants, that without any external aid, or the support of regular troops, they not only cleared their territory of the enemy, but carried their incursions into the adjoining provinces of Swabia, Bavaria, and Lombardy.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

48.

Results of
these victories
in the entire
deliverance of
the Tyrol.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 259,
265. Barth.
212, 215.
Pel. iv. 38,
39.

On the west, the peasantry of the Vorarlberg repulsed a body of French and Wirtemburghers who attempted to penetrate into Bregentz; on the east, Chastellar, who had collected four thousand regular troops, raised the blockade of Sachsenburg, and drove the enemy back to Villach; in the south, Leinengen cleared the whole valley of Trent of the enemy, and then turning to the left, descended the defile of the Val Sugana, and made himself master of Bassano at the entrance of the plains of Treviso. Returning from thence to the banks of the Adige, he threw himself into the castle of Trent, where he was soon besieged by a division of Eugene's Italian army. The landsturm of the upper Adige, however, flew to his relief; the Italians, overwhelmed by numbers, retired with considerable loss to Dolce; and the whole valley of the Adige, as far as Verona, was cleared of the enemy. The Vorarlberg followed the example of Tyrol: all the valleys took up arms, and seven thousand well-armed marksmen, besides a landsturm of equal force, carried terror and devastation over all the adjacent provinces of Germany. Moeskirch and Memmingen were successively occupied, and laid under contribution; Constance fell into their hands; their victorious bands appeared even at the gates of Munich and Augsburg; and, in conjunction with the inhabitants of Swabia, who

49.

The Tyrolese
even make
incursions
into all the
neighbouring
country.
June 3.

June 6.

June 9.

June 29.

CHAP.

LVIII.

1809.

were highly discontented with the exactions and tyranny of the French troops, delivered no less than seventeen thousand of the prisoners taken at Ehmühl, Ebersberg, and Vienna, who found refuge in the valleys of the Tyrol, and were speedily formed into fresh battalions. To the south of the Alps, Bassano, Belluno, Feltre, were repeatedly in their possession; they communicated with the Austrian regulars in Carniola; levied contributions to the gates of Verona, Brescia, and Como; and, spreading the flame of insurrection from the Black Forest to the plains of Lombardy, and from Salzburg to the Grisons, soon had twenty thousand infantry and eight hundred horse, regularly organised and equipped, under arms, besides a still greater number of brave men, undisciplined, indeed, but skilled in the use of arms, ready, in case of invasion, to defend their native valleys.¹

¹ Pel. iv. 38,
39. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
218. Gesch.
A. Hoter,
259, 277.
Barth. 212,
220.

50.
Rise of the
insurrection
in the north
of Germany.

While this heroic contest was going forward in the Tyrol and Vorarlberg, the generous flame had extended to the north of Germany, and the indignant feelings of an insulted people had wellnigh induced a general revolt against the French authority in Saxony and Westphalia.

It has been already detailed with what ardent though inconsiderate enthusiasm the people of Prussia had rushed into the contest of 1806, and what oppressive burdens were laid upon them after its disastrous termination.* Since that time the continued presence of the French troops, and the enormous plunder levied by their authority under the name of contributions, had still farther spread the flame of discontent: dear-bought experience had dispelled all the illusions in favour of French principles, and the people were no where so ready to throw off the yoke as in those principalities where separate thrones had been erected in favour of members of the Buonaparte family. Such was the weight of the oppression under which they laboured, that the ramifications of a secret and most formidable insurrection were spread over all the north of Germany. The ancient Gothic blood, slow to warm, but enduring in purpose, was every where inflamed; the feeling of patriotism, a

* *Ante*, Chap. xliii. § 89; and Chap. xlvii. § 82.

sense of duty, the precepts of religion, all concurred to rouse a disposition to resistance. The selfish mourned over the visible decrease of their substance under the withering contributions of Napoleon ; the generous, over the degradation of their country and the slavery of the human race. Every where the Tugendbund was in activity : Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, and Westphalia, in an especial manner, were agitated, from the enormous weight of the burdens imposed on their inhabitants by the French government. Twenty thousand disbanded soldiers were scattered over the former dominions of England in the German empire, ready at the first signal to compose an army ; as many ardent and discontented spirits existed in Cassel and Westphalia, awaiting only the first success of the Austrian arms to declare openly in their behalf. From the Thuringian forest to the banks of the Vistula, from the Bohemian mountains to the shores of the Baltic, the threads of a vast association existed, held together by the sacred bond of patriotism, its members vowed to devote themselves to their fatherland. Though the court of Berlin did not venture openly to fan the flame, yet in secret they could not but wish for its success ; and several of the most energetic members of the cabinet awaited only the advance of the Austrian banners to urge Frederick William to join the great confederacy for European freedom.¹

¹ Hard. x.
325, 326.
Pel. iii. 10,
13. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
212, 213.

It was chiefly with a view to give support and consistency to this enthusiastic spirit that the grand Austrian army, in the opening of the campaign, advanced towards Bayreuth and Franconia ; and it was in consequence of the unfortunate abandonment of that design, and the return of great part of these troops, when already on the borders of Franconia, to the banks of the Inn, that the early disasters of the campaign, as already noticed, were incurred.* Two of the Archduke's corps were far advanced towards the Rhine, and could not be recalled in time to share in the battles of Abensberg and Eckmühl ; while the concentrated masses of Napoleon were thrown upon the Imperial army, weakened in the centre by the advance of the van in one direction, and the retreat of the rear in another. But this early irruption of the Austrians towards Franconia and Saxony excited a pro-

51.

Its first outbreak on the approach of the Austrian Grand Army.

* *Ante*, Chap. lvi. § 20.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

May 7.

May 25.

¹ Pel. iii. 23,

31. Jom. iii.

234. Hard. x.

330, 331.

Ann. Reg.

1809, 213.

54.

His prospects
there.

succeeded in gaining possession of that important fortress, all the north of Germany would have been in a blaze ; for it contained five hundred pieces of cannon, and a hundred and twenty thousand stand of arms, besides ammunition in proportion. The news of so vast an acquisition would speedily have brought thirty thousand men to his standards, whom its impregnable ramparts would have given the means of disciplining in security. It is the more to be regretted that he did not attempt a *coup-de-main* against it, as the urban guards would speedily have given him the means of defending its walls, and numerous partisans within the town were already prepared to favour his entrance. Ignorant, however, of these propitious circumstances, he turned aside upon the first appearance of resistance, at the distance of a mile from the glacis, and retired to Domitz on the other side of the Elbe ; having by an equally unfortunate accident diverged from the Hartz mountains, where he might have united with the remains of Dornberg's corps, which had taken refuge in their fastnesses ; and together they would have formed a body of disciplined men, adequate to the encounter of the whole forces of Westphalia, which at that period contained hardly two thousand regular soldiers. His unfortunate direction, however, down the Elbe, deluded by the hope of obtaining succour from the English cruisers on the coast, led him far away from all assistance ; and at length being pursued, though slowly, and at a respectful distance, by a considerable body of Dutch and Westphalian troops, he threw himself into Stralsund, of which he gained possession without much resistance, the greater part of the garrison having joined his standard.¹

He was now at length within a renowned fortress, abundantly stored with provisions, and communicating with the sea ; the isle of Rugen seemed to offer a secure asylum in case of disaster ; and he had the good fortune, the day after his arrival, to capture a convoy of seven hundred barrels of powder on its road to Denmark. But the defences of the fortress had been almost entirely dismantled by order of Napoleon : only twenty rusty guns were mounted on the ramparts ; the palisades were levelled with the ground ; and the ditches, half choked

up by luxuriant vegetation, presented hardly any obstacle to an enemy. Still Schill had considerable means of resistance at his disposal: his troops had swelled to two thousand infantry, and twelve squadrons of cavalry; two companies had been formed of students from the universities, armed as yet only with pikes; and the landwehr of Pomerania, five thousand strong, might be expected to augment his forces, if he could hold out for a few days, in order to give them time to assemble. Where, where was England then? A single brig, with her pendant, would have inspired such spirit into the garrison as would have rendered them invincible; three thousand men, and a few frigates, would have rendered Stralsund the base of an insurrection which would speedily have spread over the whole of northern Germany, determined the irresolution of Prussia, thrown eighty thousand men on Napoleon's line of communication, and driven him to a disastrous retreat from Aspern to the Rhine. But the English government, as usual, insensible to the value of time in war, had made no preparation to turn to good account this universal demonstration in their favour in the north of Germany; and, as with the Vendéans at Granville in 1793,* her forces did not appear on the theatre till the standards of their allies had sunk in the conflict. In vain all eyes were turned towards the ocean; in vain every steeple was crowded with gazers, anxiously surveying with telescopes the distant main: not a friendly sail appeared, not a pendant of England brought hope and consolation to the besieged.¹

¹ Pel. iii. 34.
Hard. x. 330.
Jom. iii. 234.

Deprived of the hope for succour, on which he had mainly relied in directing his steps to the sea-coast, Schill did all that prudence and energy could effect to strengthen his position. Palisades were hastily erected; the vicinity of the gates was armed; barricades were thrown up behind the breaches and in the streets, and the external defences put in some sort of order. But, before his preparations could be completed, the hand of fate was upon him. The French authorities, now every where thoroughly alive to the dangers of this insurrection, made the most vigorous efforts to crush it in the bud: troops marched from all sides to the neighbourhood of Stralsund;

55.
His defeat
and death.

* *Ante*, chap. xii. § 83.

CHAP.
LVIII.1809.
May 31.

the Dutch and Danish soldiers were united to all the French who could be hastily drawn together; and on the 31st May, General Gratien, with six thousand men, commenced the assault. The patriots made a gallant defence; but the dismantled walls presented huge breaches on all sides, through which, despite the utmost resistance, the assailants penetrated, and the interior barricades were forced. Still every street was obstinately contested. The result was yet doubtful, when Schill was killed, and his heroic band, disheartened and without a leader, after his loss dispersed. The insurrection in the north of Germany was extinguished; and, on the same day on which General Gratien had hoisted the French colours on the walls, the English cruisers approached the harbour. Arrived a few hours sooner, the place had been secured, the insurrection spread over the whole north of Germany, and Wagram had been Leipsic! Such is the value of time in war.¹

¹ Pel. iii. 35.
Hard. x 330,
331. Jom. iii.
234. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
213.

56.
Movement of
the Duke of
Brunswick.
May 4.
May 22.

The Duke of Brunswick Oels, who, at the same time that Schill left Berlin, had with a small Austrian force advanced out of the Bohemian frontier, and made himself master of Leipsic and other considerable towns in Saxony, being unable to effect a junction either with Schill or Dornberg, and surrounded by superior forces, was obliged to retire by Zittau into Bohemia, from whence, after the battle of Wagram, he contrived to make his way across all the north of Germany, and was ultimately taken on board the English cruisers, and conveyed, with his black legion, still two thousand strong, to the British shores. The insurrection was thus every where suppressed; but such was the impression which it produced upon Napoleon, that the whole corps of Kellerman, thirty thousand strong, which otherwise would have been called up to the support of the Grand Army, was directed to the north of Germany.²

* Ann. Reg.
1809, 213.
Pel. iii. 26.
Jom. 235.

This gigantic contest stained also the waters of the Vistula with blood. It has been already mentioned* that the Archduke Ferdinand, at the head of a corps of the Austrian army, mustering in all thirty-two thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, with ninety-six guns,

* *Ante*, chap. lvi. § 17.

was destined to invade the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, at the same time that the Archduke Charles crossed the Inn, and the Archduke John descended from the Carinthian mountains into the Italian plains. The direction of so considerable a portion of the Imperial troops to a quarter where their operations could have no immediate effect upon the issue of the campaign, at a time when it might easily have been foreseen that the whole force of Napoleon would be hurled at once against the heart of the monarchy, might justly be stigmatised as a serious fault on the part of the Austrian cabinet, if military operations and consequences alone were taken into consideration. But this was very far indeed from being the case. Throughout the whole contest, the military preparations of the cabinet of Vienna were justly considered as subordinate to their political measures; and it was chiefly in consequence of the former being unsuccessful that the latter miscarried. The government were well aware that, the moment they threw down the gauntlet, the whole military force which Napoleon could command would be directed with consummate skill against the centre of their power. They could not hope, even with the aid of English subsidies, to be successful, in the crippled state of the monarchy, in resisting so formidable an invasion, unless they succeeded in rousing other nations to engage with them in the contest.¹

To effect this, early and imposing success was requisite; something which should counterbalance the prevailing and far-spread terror of the French arms, and induce neutral or semi-hostile cabinets to forget their divisions, and incur the risk of venturing boldly for the cause of general freedom. It was toward the attainment of this object that all the military demonstrations of the cabinet of Vienna at that period had been directed. The march of the Archduke Charles towards Franconia and Bayreuth was intended to determine the hesitation of the Rhenish Confederacy, and rouse the numerous malcontents of Westphalia, Hanover, and Cassel, into action; that of the Archduke John and Chastellar, to spread the flame of insurrection through the plains of Italy and the mountains of the Tyrol and Vorarlberg. Not less important than either of these, in its political consequences, the advance

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

57.

Operations in
Poland under
the Archduke
Ferdinand.

¹ Pel. iii. 46,
47. Jom. iii.
237, 238.

58.

Object of
those opera-
tions.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

of the Archduke Ferdinand with an imposing force to Warsaw, would, it was hoped, at once paralyse the strength of Saxony, the only sincere ally of Napoleon among the native German powers, by depriving it of all aid from its Polish possessions; offer a rallying point to the numerous discontented in that kingdom; afford an inducement to Prussia to join the common cause, by securing its rear and holding out the prospect of regaining its valuable Polish provinces; and at the same time give Russia a decent pretext for avoiding any active part in the contest, by the apparent necessity of providing against hostilities on her own frontier; a pretext of which there was reason to hope the cabinet of St Petersburg, despite the French alliance, would not be unwilling to take advantage.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
237, 238.
Pel. iii. 46,
48. Thib. vii.
310.

59.
Forces of
the Grand-
duchy of
Warsaw.
Success of
Ferdinand,
and fall of
Warsaw.

The army, of which PRINCE PONIATOWSKY had the direction, in the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, was not equal to the encounter of so considerable a force as the Austrians now directed against him. Great activity, indeed, had been displayed, since the peace of Tilsit, in organising an effective body of troops in that recently acquired possession of the House of Saxony; and three legions of infantry, commanded by Poniatowsky, Zayonscheck, and Dombrowsky, formed a total force of twenty-two thousand men, including nearly six thousand excellent cavalry. But great part of these troops were newly levied, and had not yet acquired an adequate degree of military efficiency; the territory they had to guard, extending from Dantzic to Cracow, was extensive; and the flower of the Polish troops were in Napoleon's Imperial Guard, or engaged in distant hostilities in the Spanish peninsula. The French Emperor, moreover, relying on the invasion of the Austrian province of Galicia by the Russian forces, had not only made no dispositions to support the Grand-duchy with external aid, but had retained the Saxons under Bernadotte for immediate support to the Grand Army on the Bohemian frontier; so that Poniatowsky found himself, with not more than twelve thousand disposable troops, exposed in front of Warsaw to the attack of nearly triple that number of enemies. That renowned leader, however, who to an ardent love of his country united the most profound hatred of the strangers by whom it had been despoiled, and military

talent⁸ of no ordinary kind, matured in the best school, that of misfortune, resolved to stand firm with this inconsiderable body ; and without invoking or trusting to the aid of the Russians, more hateful as allies than the Austrians as enemies, to rely on their own valour alone for the defence of the capital. He drew up his little army at Raszyn with considerable skill, and for four hours opposed a gallant resistance to the enemy ; but the contest was too unequal, between thirty thousand regular soldiers and twelve thousand men in great part recently levied ; and he was at length obliged to retire with the loss of five hundred killed, a thousand wounded, and four pieces of cannon. Warsaw was now uncovered ; and as Poniatowsky found himself unable to man the extensive works which had been begun for its defence, he was compelled, with bitter regret, to sign a capitulation, in virtue of which he was permitted to evacuate the capital, which two days afterwards was occupied by the Austrian troops.¹

Accompanied by the senate, authorities, and principal inhabitants of Warsaw, Poniatowsky retired to the right bank of the Vistula, and took up a position between Modlin and Sicrock, on the Bug. The capital presented a mournful appearance on the entrance of the Imperialists ; and in the melancholy countenances of the citizens might be seen how deep-seated was the national feeling, which, notwithstanding all the political insanity of the people which had subverted their independence, still longed for that first of blessings. This direction of the march of Poniatowsky was conceived with considerable skill, and had a powerful influence upon the fate of the campaign ; for the Austrians had calculated upon his retiring to Saxony, and abandoning the Grand-duchy to its fate ; whereas the continuance of the Polish troops in the centre of that country both evinced a determination to defend it to the last extremity, and kept alive the spirit of the inhabitants by the assurance which it held out that they would not be deserted. The first care of Poniatowsky was to put the important fortresses of Modlin and Sicrock in a respectable posture of defence ; and **having done so, he boldly, by the directions of Napoleon,**

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

April 19.

April 21.

April 23.

¹ Pel. iii.

55, 63. Jom

iii. 237, 238.

Ogintha, ii.

353.

60.

Skilful measures of Poniatowsky to prolong the contest in the Grand-duchy.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

May 14.

May 15.

¹ Pel. iii. 63.
71. Thib.
vii. 309, 310.
Jom. iv. 238.

left the enemy in possession of the capital and three-fourths of the territory of the Grand-duchy, and threw himself upon the right bank of the Vistula, remounting that stream towards Galicia, whither Prince Gallitzin, at the head of twenty thousand auxiliary Russians, was slowly bending his steps. Meanwhile the Archduke Ferdinand more rapidly descended the left bank, and in the middle of May appeared before Thorn. In the course of this movement, Poniatowsky obtained intelligence that an Austrian division had crossed over to the right bank of the Vistula, and lay unsupported at Ostrowek in front of Gora. Rapidly concentrating a superior force, he suddenly attacked the enemy, routed them, and made fifteen hundred prisoners. Thus the opposing armies mutually passed and crossed each other : Poniatowsky, relying on the support of the Russians, menaced Galicia and the Austrian provinces ; while the Austrians penetrated to the Lower Vistula, raised the standard of insurrection in the old Prussian provinces, and threatened Dantzic itself.¹

61.
Discovery of
the secret
leaning of the
Russians
towards
Austria.

An event occurred in the course of this expedition of the Archduke Ferdinand's light troops across the Vistula, attended in the end with more important consequences than any other in the Polish campaign. In pursuing the Austrians on the right bank of the river, a courier was taken by the Poles with despatches from the Russian general Gortschakoff, who lay with his division at Brzysc, to the Archduke, in which he congratulated him on his victory at Raszyn, and capture of Warsaw, expressed hopes for his ulterior success, and breathed a wish that he might soon join his arms to the Austrian eagles. This letter was immediately forwarded to Napoleon, who received it at Schœnbrunn in the end of May. He was highly indignant at the discovery, and transmitted the letter without delay to St Petersburg, accompanied by a peremptory demand for an explanation. The Russian cabinet hastened to make every reparation in their power : Gortschakoff's letter was disavowed, and he himself recalled from his command ; while CHERNICHEFF, aide-de-camp to Alexander, who was the military *chargé d'affaires* for the Czar at the headquarters of the French Emperor, exerted all his skill

to remove the unfavourable impression produced by this unlucky discovery: Napoleon, who, after the battle of Aspern, had no need of another powerful enemy on his hands, feigned to be satisfied, and the approach of the Russian troops to the theatre of war, soon after, caused the affair to be hushed up. But the impression made on his mind was never effaced: he saw that the ascendant of Tilsit was at an end, and frequently repeated to those in his immediate confidence, "I see that after all I must make war on Alexander."¹

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Sav. iv. 92,
93. Pel. iii.
71, 72. Thib.
vii. 310.

Conversing at Ebersdorf on this subject, with Savary, who was in a peculiar manner admitted to his inmost thoughts, from having been formerly ambassador at St Petersburg, he said, "I was perfectly in the right not to trust to such allies. What worse could have happened if I had not made peace with the Russians? What have I gained by their alliance? It is more than probable that they would have declared openly against me, if a remnant of regard to the faith of treaties had not prevented them. We must not deceive ourselves; they have all fixed a rendezvous on my tomb; but they have not courage openly to set out thither. That the Emperor Alexander should not come to my assistance is conceivable; but that he should permit Warsaw to be taken, in presence almost of his army, is indeed hardly credible: it is plain that I can no longer reckon on an alliance in that quarter. Perhaps he thinks he does me a great favour by not declaring war: by my faith! if I had entertained any doubt on that subject before engaging in the affairs of Spain, I should have cared very little for the part which he took. And yet, after all, they will probably say that I am wanting to my engagements, and cannot remain at peace."²

62.
Great distrust
it
excited in the
mind of
Napoleon.

² Savary, iv.
92, 93.

The most important political event, however, which flowed from the battle of Aspern was the commencement of a secret negotiation between Austria and Prussia, which, though from the tardiness of England unsuccessful at that juncture, was not without its effect in future times, and showed that the ancient jealousies which had wrought such wonders for French supremacy, were fast giving way under the pressure of common danger. Even before that great event, a vague correspondence had been

63.
Secret nego-
tiation
between
Austria and
Prussia.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

June 8.

kept up between the two courts; and in consequence of distant overtures transmitted, first through the Count de Goltz, and subsequently the Prince of Orange, Colonel Steigenstesch had been sent by the cabinet of Vienna to Königsberg, where the King of Prussia then was, with a letter from the Emperor of Austria, in which he earnestly invited that monarch to declare openly for the common cause, and enter upon a concerted plan of military operations. Early in June the Emperor of Austria, in reply to a letter of the King of Prussia, wrote to the cabinet of Berlin, announcing that "the bearer was authorised to regulate the proportions of the forces to be employed on both sides, and the other arrangements not less salutary than indispensable for the security of the two states, in conformity with the overtures made by Count de Goltz." The proposals of Colonel Steigenstesch were, that as the war in which they were now engaged was of such a kind as was likely to decide for ever the fate of the respective monarchies, they should become bound to support each other with their whole forces; that the general direction of the campaign should be intrusted to the Imperial generalissimo; that they should mutually engage not to enter into a separate negotiation; and that the peace to be ultimately concluded should embrace not only their own, but the interests of the adjoining states. These propositions were warmly supported by Scharnhorst and Blücher, and the whole war or patriotic party in the Prussian dominions. The former offered in a fortnight's time to have fifty, in a month a hundred and twenty thousand disciplined soldiers under arms: he assured the King of secret intelligence which would secure for him, on the first signal of hostilities, Magdeburg and several other important fortresses; and strongly supported the justice of Count Stadion's opinion, so clearly expressed in his despatch, that the fate of Prussia was inseparably wound up with that of Austria, and that the two monarchies must stand or fall together.¹

¹ Stadion to Wurmberg, June 9, 1809. *Hist. x.* 321, 323. *Thib. vii.* 306, 307.

On this occasion, the cupidity and exorbitant demands of the Prussian cabinet again marred the prospect of a European alliance, and prolonged for four years longer the chains and misery of their country. Still clinging to the idea that victory must be clearly pronounced before

they declared themselves, and that they might turn to some good account the dangers and distresses of Austria, the Prussian government replied, that they had every disposition to assist the cabinet of Vienna, but that they were in want alike of arms, ammunition, and money; that they could not take a part in the contest till the views of Russia in regard to it were known; and that they must have the guarantee of a treaty for the intentions of Austria, in the event of success, before they took a place by her side. To the envoy of the Imperial government, however, it was insinuated that "a great stroke would determine the irresolution of the cabinet of Berlin;" but that, in that event, they ~~would~~ expect not merely the restoration of all the Prussian provinces of Poland, but also of *Austria's share in the partition*; Anspach, Bayreuth, a part of Saxony, and various lesser provinces, ceded at different times to France or other powers. It was, of course, beyond Colonel Steigenstesch's powers to accede to such extravagant demands: they were referred, with the proposal for a separate treaty, to the cabinet of Vienna; and meanwhile the negotiation, notwithstanding all the care of those engaged in it, to a certain degree transpired. A joint requisition was made by the ministers of France and Russia for a communication of the proposals of Austria; and although this inconvenient demand was eluded at the moment, Steigenstesch was obliged to quit Berlin, and before diplomatic relations could be established in any other channel, of which the King of Prussia still held out the prospect, the battle of Wagram had taken place, and Austria, beset on all sides, and unsupported by any Continental power, was driven to a separate accommodation.¹

Affairs wore a menacing aspect for the interests of Napoleon in more distant parts of his vast dominions. England, seeming to rise in vigour and resources as the contest advanced, was making her giant strength be felt in more than one quarter of Europe. Wellington had again landed in Portugal; the consternation produced by the Cornuua retreat had passed away; and Soult, defeated on the banks of the Douro, had with difficulty escaped from the north of Lusitania by the sacrifice of all his artillery and baggage. The Spanish armies were again assembling in the south of Castile; large forces were

CHAP.
LVIII.

1808.

64.

The exorbitant demands of Prussia cause it to fail.

June 23.

Thib. vii.
308, 309.
Jom. ii. 41.
Hard. x. 336.

65.

Operations in
Italy, and
diversion
from Sicily.

CHAP.
LXXII.

1800.

May 17.

collecting in the plains of La Mancha; and every thing indicated that ere long, a formidable demonstration against the Spanish capital would be made by the united English and Peninsular forces. A considerable expedition was preparing in the harbours of Sicily to transport a large body of English and Sicilian troops into the south of Italy, where it was well known their presence would speedily produce a general insurrection. This was the more to be dreaded, notwithstanding the well-known imbecility of the Italians in military operations, that the recent annexation of the whole Ecclesiastical States to the French empire had aroused, as might have been expected, the most vehement hostility on the part of the Roman See and its numerous adherents in the Italian States. At the same time General Miollis, the French governor of Rome, had so small a force at his command that it would be compelled, in all probability, to yield to the first summons of the Anglo-Sicilian forces. Lastly, the English, not content with their exertions in other quarters, were, it was well known, preparing an expedition of unprecedented magnitude in the harbours of the Channel; ~~some~~ had magnified to a hundred thousand armed men and forty sail of the line the forces to be employed on the occasion; the Scheldt, the Elbe, the Seine itself, were alternately assigned as the probable destination of this gigantic armament; and Napoleon, with all his resources, was too clear-sighted not to perceive that he might ere long be overmatched by the strength of a more formidable confederacy than he had yet encountered; that the English standards would soon rouse the might of northern Germany into mortal hostility; and that a second reverse on the shores of the Danube, would at once dissolve his splendid dominion, and bring the forces of Europe in appalling strength to the banks of the Rhine.*

The impression produced over the Continent by the battle of Aspern was immense. It dissipated in a great degree the charm of Napoleon's invincibility; and, more even than the dubious carnage of Eylau, diffused a general hope that the miseries of foreign domination were approaching their termination, and that a second victory over the remains of the French army, now shut up in the

* See chap. 12. and 13. where the events here alluded to are narrated.

island of Lobau, would at once restore freedom to an injured world. While the English nation abandoned themselves to transports of joy at the prospects which were thus dawning upon Europe, active endeavours were made by Austria to turn to the best account the extraordinary prosperous change which had taken place in their fortunes. Not discouraged by the failure of former attempts to rouse the north of Germany, the Duke of Brunswick Oels again advanced from Zittau, at the head of his gallant band of volunteers, towards Westphalia; while a considerable body of Imperial landwehr from Bohemia, under General Amende, invaded Saxony, and another, under Radivojivich, five thousand strong, overran Franconia and penetrated to Bayreuth. The forces remaining in that kingdom, the bulk of which had been drawn under Bernadotte to the banks of the Danube, were in no condition to oppose this irruption; and the royal family, flying from their dominions, took refuge in France. Dresden and Leipsic were occupied by the Austrian troops; Bayreuth and Bamberg fell into their hands; the insurrection spread over all Franconia and Swabia; symptoms of disaffection were breaking out in Saxony and Westphalia; and a chain of Austrian posts, extending from the Elbe, by Nuremberg and Stockach, to the mountains of the Tyrol, entirely cut off the communication between France and the Grand Army. Meanwhile, the most energetic appeals were made every where by the Austrian commanders to the people of their own and all the adjoining countries, to take up arms; while Napoleon, weakened by a disastrous battle on the banks of the Danube, could maintain himself only by a concentration of all his forces under the walls of Vienna.¹

"Germans!" said the Duke of Brunswick, "will you continue to combat Germans? Will you, whose mothers, wives, and sisters have been outraged by the French, shed your blood in their defence? It is your brothers who now invoke you—come to break your fetters—to avenge the liberty of Germany! To arms, then, Hessians, Prussians, Brunswickers, Hanoverians! all who bear the honourable name of Germans, unite for the deliverance of your fatherland, to wipe away its shame and avenge its wrongs. Rise to deliver your country from a disgraceful yoke, under

CHAP.
LVIII.

1805

66.

Situation and prospects of Napoleon after the battle of Aspern. Duke of Brunswick takes Dresden. June 1.

June 12.

June 22.

¹ Pel. iv. 18,
22, 26. Hard.
x. 393, 394.

67.

Proclamation and energetic proceedings of the Duke of Brunswick.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

which it has so long groaned. The day of its emancipation has arrived: none more favourable can ever be desired."—"Aspern," said General Radivojivich, who had penetrated into Franconia, and occupied Bayreuth with five thousand men from Egra, in Bohemia—"Aspern has destroyed the invincibility of Napoleon! Arm yourselves for the cause of liberty, of justice, of Austria, to deliver Europe and the human race."—"You combat," said Noditz, one of the chiefs of the Tugendbund, to the Prussians of Bayreuth, "in order to restore your country to your beloved King." The Duke of Brunswick's volunteers wore a light-blue uniform, with a death's head and cross-bones on their cloaks, to indicate the mortal hostility in which they were engaged, from whence they acquired the name of the *Death's-Head Hussars*. The officers were distinguished from the privates, in a corps where all were respectable, only by a small cross on their arms. The Duke himself was as simply dressed as any of his followers: he shared their fare—slept beside them on the ground—underwent their fatigues. These martial qualities, joined to the ascendant of a noble figure and unconquerable intrepidity, so won the hearts of his followers, that they disdained to desert him even in the wreck of the fortunes of Germany, after the battle of Wagram; followed his standard with dauntless confidence across all Westphalia and Hanover, embarked in safety for England, and lived, as will appear in the sequel, to flesh their swords in the best blood of France on the field of Waterloo.¹

¹ Hard, x.
392, 394.
Pel. iv. 26,
27.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER LIII.

Note A, p. 52.

BUDGET OF GREAT BRITAIN FOR 1808.

WAR INCOME.

Malt and Pension duties,	£3,000,000
Bank advances,	3,500,000
Surplus of consolidated fund,	4,226,876
Surplus income of 1807,	2,253,111
War taxes,	20,000,000
Lottery,	300,000
Exchequer Bills,	4,500,000
Do. for East India Company,	1,500,000
Exchequer Bills charged on 1809,	1,161,100
Loan,*	8,000,000
War income,	<u>£48,441,087</u>

PERMANENT INCOME.

Customs,	£7,462,380
Excise,	17,896,145
Stamps,	4,458,735
Land and assessed taxes,	7,073,530
Post-Office,	1,277,538
Pension tax, *	62,685
Do.	71,353
Hackney coaches,	26,455
Hawkers and pedlars,	10,325
Total permanent,	<u>£38,339,146</u>
Add war,	<u>48,441,087</u>
Grand total,	<u>£86,780,233</u>

* It was afterwards by the vote of credit extended to L.10,100,000.

IN THE TYROL.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Cans.
Chastellar's division (separate from his corps,)	9672	260	

TOTAL EFFECTIVE.

In Germany, under the Archduke Charles, .	188,570	18,918	518
In Italy, under the Archduke John, . . .	42,598	4700	148
In Poland, under the Archduke Ferdinand, .	30,200	5200	94
In the Tyrol,	9,672	260	16
Grand total,	271,040	29,078	776

Of whom 250,000 might be relied on for active operations.—STUTTERHEIM, 38, 46.

END OF VOL. XII.

